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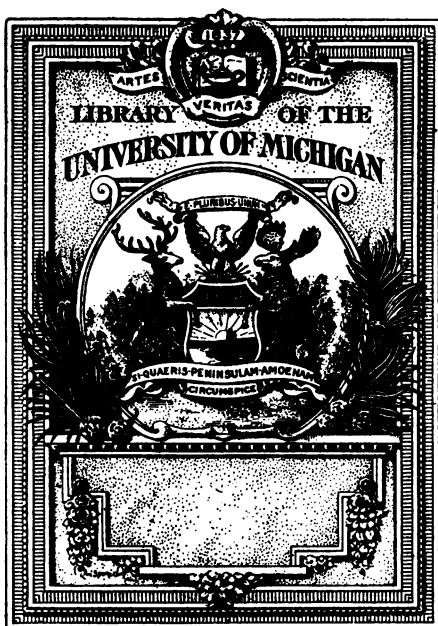
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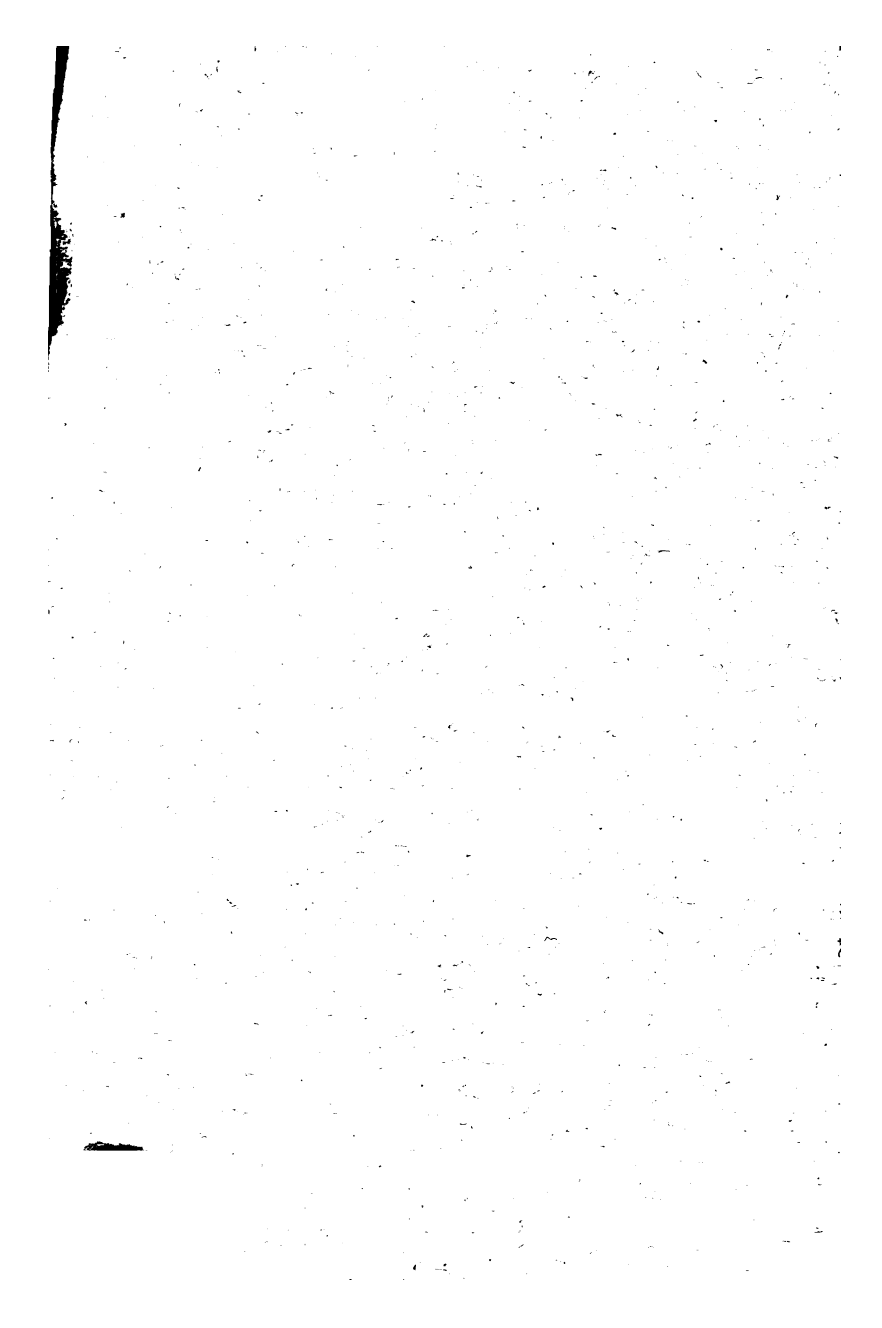
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JUST LEAVING KANYA

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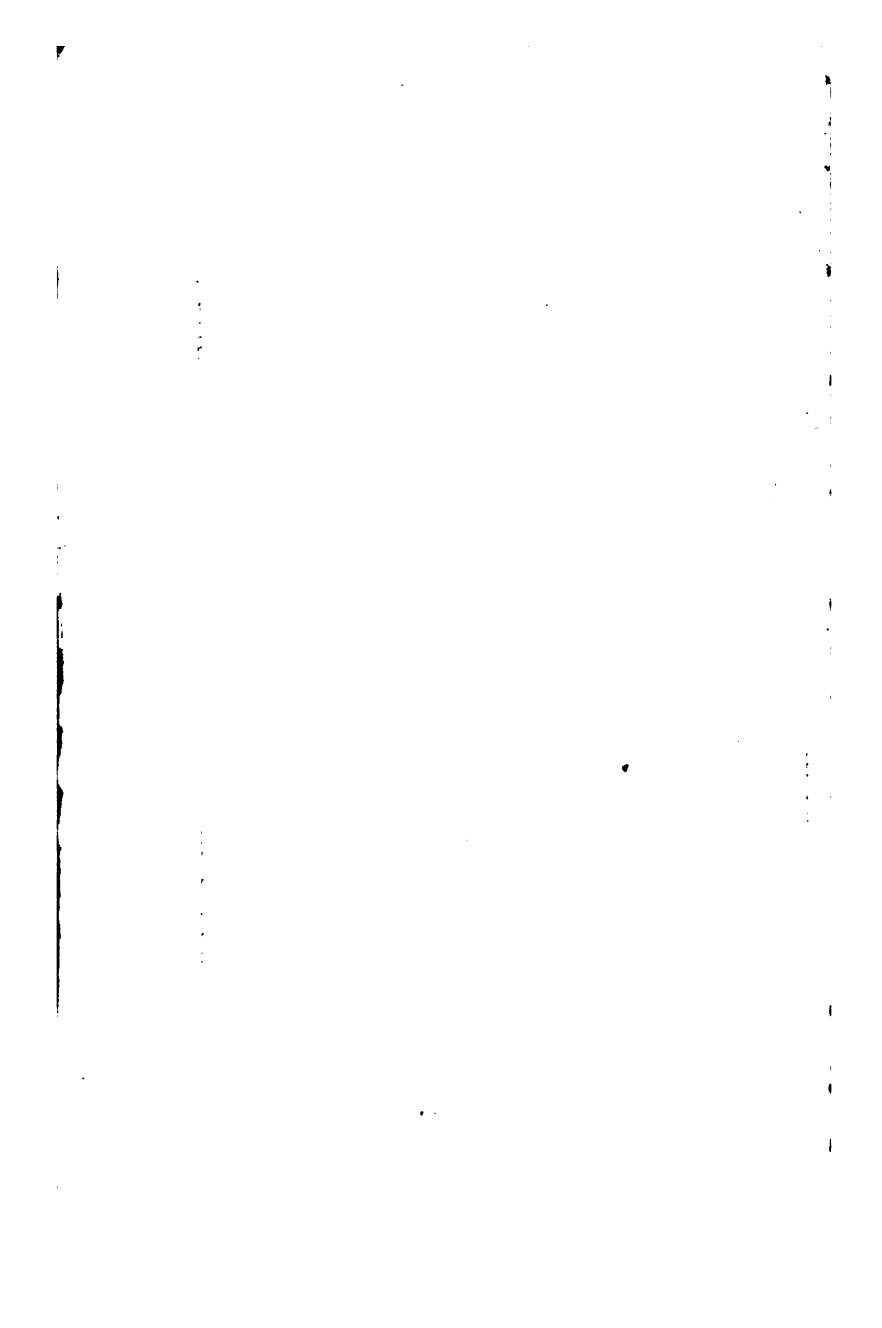
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**Ἀφιερωμένον με ἀγάπην
εἰς αὐτόν με τήν κατσαρόλαν
εἰς τὸν σιωπηλόν
καὶ εἰς αὐτόν ποῦ γελά**



A FAIR BRIGAND

CHAPTER

Joseph Chandler Brown was an expert in Argive bronzes. Graduating at Harvard in the class of 1890, he took high honors in the classics, and succeeded in winning a fellowship given by that institution, which allows the student to pass one year in study at the American Archæological Institute at Athens. For this purpose he was given the munificent sum of six hundred dollars with which to pay his fare backward and forward, and to defray the expenses of his year's sojourn.

His dear old Greek professor, in bidding him good-by, enjoined upon him not to waste a moment of the precious time which he was about to enjoy on the sacred soil of Hellas.

"Above all," he said, "perfect yourself in topography. Visit all the spots mentioned in the ancient authors. Climb the principal

mountains, that you may see the various plains and islands spread out in panorama before you. Go to Sparta, to Thebes, to Megara, Tanagra, Tyrins, Mycene, Corinth. Take Pausanias with you always, and such of the other poets or historians as refer to the place you are about to see. Reread these authors on the spot. Take Herodotus and Æschylus to Salamis, and try to imagine the battle as being brought again under your eyes, as actually taking place. You will not have a moment to waste. It will be a year of lasting profit, of glorious refreshment. Learn modern Greek while you are over there. Learn to speak it; to think in it. You ought also to visit the Greek islands and the coast of Asia Minor. Perhaps, if you are economical, you will be able to return home by way of Rome and the Italian museums, and to put in a summer term at the University of Berlin."

Mr. Brown had not been able to do all these things in a school year, neither had he found the six hundred dollars so elastic as the dear, unpractical old professor had imagined. He was, indeed, so bewildered by the largeness of the field spread out before him, that he

was reduced almost to despair from the first. Finding deep learning on so many different subjects impossible, he at length decided to take up a specialty.

"I will become an authority," he said. "Bayly of the British school is an authority on Acropolis bronzes. No man living knows so much on that subject as he. Von Griff of the German school, is the greatest living authority on antique fibulæ or safety-pins. But perhaps the Germans specialize too much. What shall it be? Epigraphy, topography, bronzes, vases, clay figurines, grave stelæ, what?"

He was nearly the whole of the first year deciding this question and making a few excursions. At the end of that time, however, he had become deeply interested in Argive bronzes. With the rest of the American Institute he participated in the excavation of the Heræum at Argos, and thereby came into possession of a rare collection of rusty knife and sword blades, safety and hair pins, mirrors, votive offerings, fragments of colanders, sieves, tools and other objects of use or ornament.

These he put to soak in a series of stone

bowls on a long table in a room of the National Museum. The bowls contained diluted acid which ate away the incrustation and allowed the inscriptions to be seen and read. Mr. Brown went every morning to this room and locked himself in. Then he fished out the little fragments of bronze, one by one. Those that were sufficiently cleaned he painted with wax and put carefully away for future reference. Where the acid was not working with sufficient rapidity he renewed it. From time to time he lifted the covers from the stone bowls, one after the other, and watched the bubbles resulting from the chemical action rise to the top. Then he replaced the covers carefully, reverently. Was not reputation, immortality, brewing for him there? Often he would repeat to himself with a sigh, as he sat before a pile of cleaned fragments: 'Joseph Chandler Brown, the greatest living authority.' What difference does the subject make? The title is the same." For hours every day he sat puzzling over the indistinct and frequently crude letters engraved thousands of years before on the bits of metal, until he really acquired extraordinary skill in reading them. Any fad or spe-

cialty attracts to itself scraps of learning from all directions, in the same manner that sticky little worms that float about in the water become enwrapped in a tiny cocoon of bits of wood and straw.

When Mr. Brown presented his thesis to the board of directors on "Some Inscriptions on Argive Bronzes," that body of wise men found it most thorough and ingenious. Every possible fact, either immediate or collateral, had been looked up and recorded in the driest possible manner. He read the paper at an open meeting of the Institute, and every one present not a professional archæologist slept clear through it, not even waking up in time to applaud; which fact so deeply impressed the Director that he mentioned Mr. Brown in the most flattering way in his annual report. Brown was therefore advised to try for the Institute fellowship, which he did—and succeeded. He accordingly found himself still in Athens in the fall of 1892, with sufficient funds to carry him through another year. Need it be said that he commenced the term with a fixed resolve to devote himself more assiduously than ever to his row of pots? Occasionally he reaped a

spear or two of harvest in form of praise. Not infrequently little gleams of that full dawn of glory which he confidently expected in the future, would flicker before his eyes.

Sometimes, if a question were raised about bronzes, one of his confrères would say, "Ask Brown. He is the bronze man." At such times his pale face would flush and he would reply modestly, "I have looked over the Argive bronzes a little. I know nothing of any of the others." His heart would beat rapidly, however, and the thought would tingle through his nerves like a shock of electricity:

"I am becoming an authority!"

The news of young Brown's devotion to study reached his relatives in Massachusetts, and a wealthy maiden aunt, who had long been prominent in the temperance movement, and who had made a will devoting most of her property to the founding of reading rooms where unlimited weak tea could be obtained at a merely nominal price per cup, became deeply interested in her nephew.

"Had I only known his worth before disposing of my property," she would often say, "I would have left him a comfortable legacy."

When the yearly report for 1892 came out Mr. Brown felt the room go round like the cabin of a sailing ship in a trough of the sea as he read the following words, written by the learned and amiable Director's own hands:

"I feel that I cannot attach too great importance to the original researches of my friend, Mr. Joseph Chandler Brown, Harvard, '90, in connection with the bronzes found during the excavations conducted by the American Institute at the Argive Heræum. Mr. Brown has investigated this subject with a degree of patience and minuteness of research remarkable in one so young. I will not refer to Mr. Brown's work at greater length here, but will advise all who may chance to see these lines to read his admirable thesis, which certainly entitles its author to the distinction of being known as the leading authority on Argive hair-pins, and places him among the first scholars of the age in the field of Heræum bronzes."

As a result of this report the maiden aunt changed her will, leaving the bulk of her property to her beloved nephew, as a befitting reward for the luster which his learning threw upon the family name. For his present uses

and to enable him to pursue his researches without annoyance, she settled upon him an immediate income of one thousand dollars per year. He therefore turned over his precious bronzes to his successor in the Institute fellowship and hied him to Berlin, where he succeeded in taking the degree of Ph.D. after two years of study, his thesis on Argive hair-pins being accepted even in Germany as original.

The fall of 1894 found Dr. Brown back in Athens, again presiding over a row of earthen bowls in the little room of the National Museum. A large number of new bronzes had been collected during his absence. Who was so able to read, arrange and publish these fragments as Dr. Brown? To tell the truth he had been homesick in Berlin for his rusty fragments and intellectual flesh-pots.

CHAPTER II

One beautiful morning in August he was puzzling over an inscription on the handle of a mirror, wondering whether the object had belonged to a priestess of Hera, or had been simply dedicated to the goddess, when he was startled by a sharp rap at the door.

"This is getting to be a nuisance," he grumbled. "I really can't be disturbed this way. I'll keep still. Perhaps they'll go away."

The ruse was not successful, however, for the knocking was repeated with persistent loudness, and a cheery voice at length exclaimed:

"Hello! Brown, old man, open the door! What's the matter? Have you swallowed some of the acid, or fallen into one of the pots? Open the door before I pound it in!"

"Hello! Anderson, is that you? Wait a moment; I'll open the door."

Brown and Anderson were great friends.

Indeed the latter was the only inmate of the Institute who ventured to take liberties with the silent and serious Authority; not, it must be said for the sake of justice, that Brown was crabbed or sullen. He was simply so wrapped up in himself and his chosen pursuit that there did not seem to be any social side to his nature.

Anderson had fiery red hair and whiskers, florid complexion and pale blue eyes. He was a graduate of a fresh-water college and a student of architecture. He was a natural musician of wonderful facility and feeling. He never hired a room for a month without having a piano moved in, and he loved to take some contemptible air like "Johnny, Get Your Gun" or "See Those Ducks at Play," for a thread on which for an hour at a time he would string the most glorious harmonies of improvisation. He could whistle like a mocking-bird, and when he was not whistling generally talked nonsense. This he did because he was really very shy and sensitive, and shrank from exposing to the public eye his genuine character, which was earnest, profound and poetic.

Anderson stood for a moment with his

hands in his pockets, looking quizzically about the room.

"How's the soup kitchen coming on?" he inquired, irreverently. Then he passed down the line of pots, and lifting the lid off each in succession called out, "Bouillon de verdigris, potage aux fines bronzes, safety-pin soup! Well, old man, we're going on another tramp."

"Who?"

"You and I."

"I'm not going."

"Oh, yes you are."

"Who says so?"

"I do."

"Well, perhaps you know more about it than I do. I wouldn't leave these bronzes now for anything in the world. I couldn't. I might come back and find the whole lot spoiled."

"Rats! Any of the museum servants can watch the soup pots as well as you can. I tell you, old man, you're getting more rusty than your bronzes. I'll warrant that if you were boiled in acid I could find an inscription on you with digammas in it. I tell you, we're going to climb Mount Olympus. We are going to hobnob with the immortal gods! We

start to-morrow morning for Volo by boat, thence to Larissa, and from there on foot. Look here, I've brought Heuzey along." Opening a book he unfolded a map upon the table.

"Here's Olympus, this long white spot. Here's the Peneios River, and, naturally enough, the Vale of Tempe. There are several ways of getting onto Olympus, according to the view you want. I propose that we start on foot from Larissa and go to this little town of Baba. From here you follow this dark line. That's a path. You see it passes through the town of Deréli, then by Lake Nezeró, through Karyá, and so on up. By this route we shall be able to climb the summit at the eastern end, Mount Kalógheros. I'm fully resolved, old man, so you might as well give in. We leave the Piræus to-morrow morning at seven. I'll meet you at Monasteráki station at six."

So saying, he shut the Heuzey with a loud slap and went out, banging the door cheerily after him. Brown could hear him whistling "Standing on the corner, didn't mean no harm" long after his shoes had ceased to squeak on the floor of the corridor.

Dr. Brown decided to leave his bronzes for a few days and make the ascent of Mount Olympus. In the topographical excursions which he had made in pursuance of his professor's advice he had contracted the mountain-climbing habit.

The confirmed mountain-climber no sooner sees or hears of a lofty summit than he feels its very existence a challenge. The mountain seems to say, "You can't climb me"; and he shakes his mental fist at it and thinks back: "I'll show you whether I can or not. You feel big, don't you? Well, I'll stand on your head."

There are metaphysical reasons intertwined with the strongest instincts of our nature that give mountain-climbing its deep hold over its victims. It appeals both to a man's noble and ignoble side. First, there is the simple desire to rise, to get onto a higher plane, into purer air, away from the petty and sordid cares of the common world. Such a yearning is noble. It is the lever of the old Greek philosopher that is lifting the world. But alas for our poor little Jekyll-Hyde souls! Mixed with this very yearning is a feeling of contempt for our fellow-beings, a belief that fortune should have placed us in a position where we could

look down upon them. Gladstone, walking along the foot of an Alpine precipice, is a Lilliputian in the eyes of the Cook's tourist standing on the top.

A high mountain is a sort of gigantic editorial tripod. One gives a majestic wave of the hand and says:

"Had I been making the world, I would have put Melos over there, a little further east, and would have moved Paros into line. The Cyclades are very pretty, but they lack harmony and unity of purpose. After God has made a few more worlds, giving greater attention to finish and detail, He should be able to do something quite creditable. We hope to hear from Him again."

The mountain-climbing habit is like the cigar habit. One may go without his mountain for a time, may think that he is entirely cured, but the poison is in his veins.

Dr. Brown placed the waxed bronzes safely under lock and key, gave the museum attendant strict directions concerning the precious bowls, and resigned himself with a sigh to a week's absence in Thessaly and Macedonia.

"For so long," he reflected, "I may safely leave."

CHAPTER III

The next morning at seven o'clock Brown and Anderson were standing on the deck of a dirty little Greek steamer bound for Volo, each attired in knickerbockers, heavy boots of untanned leather, a soft felt hat and a white woolen sweater worn instead of a vest.

Dr. Brown was a romantic-looking figure at all times, and this costume was peculiarly becoming to him. No one would have taken him for an archæologist, nor did his outward appearance suggest a pursuit of any dry branch of learning. He was very tall and graceful, though his legs were a trifle too long for his body. His features were regular and delicate, and the clearness of his complexion was emphasized by a few freckles which served the purpose often attained by ladies by means of a black patch. Light hair, slightly curling, large brown eyes and perfect teeth put the finishing touches to a body which should have been inhabited by a

more susceptible and romantic soul than that of Joseph Chandler Brown, Ph.D., Authority on Argive bronzes. Nature often puts together strangely incongruous souls and bodies.

The "Thessalia" did not arrive in Volo until evening of the day after departure. Anderson produced a mouth-organ during the voyage, and amused himself picking out the weird airs to which a number of the sailors were singing monotonous ballads, each an hour or more in length.

Dr. Brown passed most of his time striding mournfully up and down the deck and wondering if Michali was tending to the bronzes properly. He did not forget them for a moment until the sublime mass of Olympus loomed in sight. Then he gave a little gasp, and his pale cheeks became suffused for an instant with heightened color, an exhibition as nearly approaching excitement as he ever displayed.

Anderson ran up to him, and seizing him by the arm pointed to the majestic spectacle.

"There it is, old man!" he cried. "That's old Olymp. Isn't it superb, tremendous? Just think, a carrion crow can flit over the top of it, for the sole purpose of keeping his eye

on the Eastern Question, and being in first at the Feast of Corpses; while a man's soul, if it wants to get on a height, must drag a beastly hulk of a body along with it. I must admit, however, that a wingless condition promotes imagination. If the ancients had been built like Byzantine angels, they would have seen that the top of Olympus was covered with dirt and ugly bowlders, instead of giving us nebulous gates, gorgeous palaces and a whole female seminary of stunning goddesses frisking about in scanty drapery."

Dr. Brown replied judiciously and after due reflection:

"The ancients must have begun to climb Olympus in quite early times, as the belief that the gods actually lived on the summit did not come down very late. Do you happen to remember any authors that would throw light on this subject?"

Brown and Anderson struck bravely out, early in the morning after their arrival at Larissa, through the beautiful valley of Thessaly with the silvery Peneios for their guide. Each carried an Alpine bag swung over his back and a stout stick in his hand. So early did they get under way that the numerous

minarets of Larissa looked like immense cypresses. A stork, standing insecurely on one slim leg, peered curiously down at them from his huge nest on the roof of a Turkish house. The leg shot straight up from the center of the nest like a peg, and the ungainly bird seemed stuck upon it.

At Baba they stopped and breakfasted on bread, resin wine, sour cheese and a cup of Turkish coffee. Olympus loomed so near on the other side of the river that it seemed to have come part of the way to meet them. They sat till ten o'clock resting in a cool, shady village, not at all annoyed by the fact that the entire population was watching them with insatiable curiosity from behind trees, corners of houses and half-closed doors, and that they were surrounded by a semi-circle of wild-looking children who stared as though the newcomers had just dropped from another world. Having traveled much in Greece, they had become used to such treatment.

"What time is it, Joe?" Anderson asked at length.

Dr. Brown unbuttoned the pocket of his soft shirt and produced therefrom a beautiful Howard watch with gold cases, a recent gift

from his admiring aunt. When he opened it the polished interior glittered in the sun like a mirror.

"Hello!" said Anderson, "how often have I warned you against taking that brass turnip along when you go on trips? There are plenty of men in Greece would knock us on the head for half its value."

The Doctor slid the timepiece hastily into his pocket and glanced furtively around him. Every big brown eye in sight had doubled in size since the exhibition of the watch, and many mouths were open.

The young men called for their bill, paid one-half the demand and went their way.

"Farewell, gentlemen," called after them the landlord, bowing low. All Baba followed his example, and the two strangers left the town lifting their hats to right and left, like princes quitting their ancestral estate.

"They are Englishmen," cried a woman over their heads to a female friend in a distant house.

"Lords! lords!" shouted a gawky boy, voicing an opinion that was loudly echoed by many others.

"Lords, but not fools," grumbled the host,

wiping the table with his unspeakably filthy apron and thinking of his amended bill.

They crossed the many-arched bridge over the Peneios, but had not advanced far into the beautiful valley on the other side before they were overtaken by a dapper little Greek attired in European costume.

"Hello, Dandy, does your mother know you're out?" inquired Anderson, looking the new arrival seriously in the face.

"I beg pardon," replied the latter in Greek, "what was your honor pleased to observe?"

"I asked if we were to have the unspeakable joy of your society for a while."

"Certainly, and if your honors wish, even to Karyá. I did not have the pleasure of seeing you in Baba, but I heard that two English lords had passed through, and I hurried on in hopes of overtaking you. But you speak Greek so beautifully! Does your friend also know our tongue?"

"Far better than I," replied Anderson, "but he seldom uses his own. We call him the silent man."

"Where did you both learn Greek? At the English university? You English are a won-

derful people! Whatever you undertake you accomplish."

"This is a fresh duck!" exclaimed Anderson in English. "I must ease up his mind on the lord question immediately. We can't afford to pay lord prices the rest of this trip. But what a dapper little puppet it is!"

The word "dapper" very well expressed the appearance of their enforced companion. He was slight and short, with small hands covered with rings, and small feet encased in high-heeled French boots. He wore light trousers of a loud pattern, a brown velvet coat and a vest of the same material. A small soft hat was pressed down into the center of his luxuriant curly hair, and a red necktie with long ends adorned the front of his silk shirt. There was something about his beard and mustaches that caused one to glance twice into his face. They seemed too heavy, somehow, for his delicate, almost feminine features. Altogether he was not a figure that one would expect to meet among the members of a rude shepherd community.

"You do us too great honor in supposing we are lords," said Anderson, employing the

stilted lingo which Greeks always use when conversing with foreigners. "We are simply poor American students who are making a trip to Olympus on foot."

"Ah, Americans! I might have known as much. Americans are so civilized, so advanced! So superior to the English! We are fortunate to have you among us. A truly wonderful people! Whatever you undertake to do you accomplish. All Americans are rich, even if they are not lords."

At Deréli they refreshed themselves with masticha at the urgent request of their new friend.

"We must push on now," he said, rising briskly. "Leave everything to me. Put yourselves in my hands. I will attend to everything. We shall be at Lake Nezeró in about two hours and a half, and in as much more time you should be able to reach Karyá. It is now about eleven. Don't take out your watch, my dear friend," turning to Brown, who had made an involuntary motion as though to consult the time. "There are some dangerous characters in these parts, and one should never exhibit anything of value. When we get well out of the village we'll see

what time it is. As I was saying, leave everything to me. Unfortunately I can't accompany you as far as Karyá. I am going to spend a few days with my dear old mother in Nezeró. Filial duty, you know. Duty and pleasure, for my mother is a dear old lady. What time will you leave Karyá? You'll begin the actual ascent from there, I suppose?"

"A man can't be wholly bad who loves his mother," observed Brown, "and as he intends to leave us at Nezeró, we might as well be civil to him."

"What does your friend say?" asked the Greek of Anderson.

"He was just observing," replied Anderson, "that we ought to leave Karyá at eleven o'clock at night. We want to be on top of Olympus at sunrise, you see. It's the only time there's a chance for a clear view."

"Holy Virgin, but you Americans are a wonderful people! Whatever you undertake you accomplish. But you're quite right. The sun rises very early now, and to be on the summit in time you must start at eleven, exactly at eleven. Leave everything to me. I will find you a guide in Nezeró, a shepherd who

has often made the ascent. Pay him whatever you please. In fact, when I tell him that you are Americans, he will probably not accept anything from you. We Greeks love the Americans so much! You are so civilized, so well-bred, so philhellenic! He will have you some chickens killed in Karyá, and will get you some wine such as you have never tasted. You must make all your arrangements in Nezeró before crossing the line, so as to deal with Greeks, not Turks. The difference between us Greeks and the Turks is that we are civilized while they are barbarians."

All this was said in the sweetest of tones and with many gestures more expressive than words.

"Doesn't the fellow talk too plausibly?" asked the Doctor, in English.

"I was thinking of that same thing myself," replied Anderson; "his teeth are too long and white, and remind me too much of a wolf when he smiles. There's a treacherous look in his eye, too, that I don't like. I wonder what his racket is?" turning to the Greek. "I was just saying to my friend here, that we cannot let you go to so much trouble for us. You must at least let us repay you."

"Never! never! Indeed, you hurt me in making the suggestion. We Greeks love the Americans too much! We do not regard you as strangers. You are the only people that we feel sure are always our friends."

"Kind of a 'cause Mary loved the lamb' business," said Anderson in English. "Somehow this philhellene twaddle does not go down with me. I've lived too long in the country. Why, the philhellene is the natural prey of the Greek."

"I have an idea," suggested the Doctor; "whenever there's a lull in his talk, you start in and whistle, and keep it up all the way to Nezeró. Anything is preferable to this man's inane chatter."

"That's devilish complimentary to my whistling," laughed Anderson. "However, I'll do it."

CHAPTER IV

True to his promise, the Greek found a guide at Nezeró without the least difficulty. Everybody knew him and treated him with the greatest deference. His commands were obeyed on the run, and the proprietor of the little café, where he insisted on taking his "distinguished guests," as he called them, for refreshment, cuffed his one miserable waiter in the great man's presence, simply as an evidence of zeal.

"'Kyr' Demetri seems to own the place," said Anderson, applying to their officious friend the name by which the inhabitants called him.

"He is so well known here that he must be respectable," observed Dr. Brown. "Besides, what beautiful Greek he speaks!"

"I should like him better, nevertheless," replied Anderson, "if his teeth were not so long and white. Perhaps if he knew they annoyed me, he would pull them out."

"Now, Spiro," said Kyr' Demetri to the shepherd whom he had engaged as guide, "you will see that these two gentlemen get a good dinner in Karyá. An omelet, roast chicken and some of Yonne's best wine. Tell him they are friends of mine. Get them a good room, do you hear? So that they can lie down and get a little sleep. And look to it that they are under way at eleven o'clock exactly."

"Very well, Effendi, very well. Have no fears. I will attend to everything as though you were to go yourself."

After much handshaking and many repeated avowals of admiration for Americans on the part of Kyr' Demetri, Anderson and the Doctor again resumed their way. The old shepherd who had been chosen as their guide trudged on ahead, as silent as their late friend had been loquacious.

"Doesn't he look too feeble to climb Olympus?" asked the Doctor.

"I shouldn't choose him for a Marathon winner," replied Anderson. "How crooked the old chap is! And he gets as much service out of that crook of his as though it were an extra leg."

"He'd make a good Tiresias," commented Dr. Brown. "His long gray locks are sufficiently venerable, and his homespun suit, if washed, would be simple enough, to give some idea of an ancient costume."

Between Nezeró and the Turkish town of Karyá are two mountains, known as Analepsis and Metamorphosis. The main road lies between them, and the scenery here is wild and lonely in the extreme. There is quite a steep ascent at this place, and the young Americans had not gone far before they noticed that their aged and apparently decrepit guide was shuffling over the ground at an astonishing rate of speed. Several times Anderson called out to him in English:

"Hello, you old bundle of bones! This is no sprinting match. Slow up a bit, can't you?" or: "Hi there, my sprightly young Phidippides! You'll kill us old men! Whew, Doc, isn't it hot, though? If the old codgers around here amble over the hills like this, what sort of a gait do the young men usually strike?"

Turning at last a sharp bend, they saw in the distance three villainous looking characters step into the main road from behind a huge rock and then as suddenly jump back

again. Immediately afterward, as though reflecting that they had been seen, the trio emerged into view and sat down upon a flat stone. They were armed with Gras rifles of the kind affected by Greek mountaineers, manufactured short in order that the shepherds may hide them under their capotes when they cross over the line into Turkey. The handles of long knives could be seen sticking out from their belts. They were dressed in Albanian costume, and their unkempt hair and beards gave them a wild, fierce aspect.

"Those look like brigands" said Anderson.

"If I didn't know that brigandage was extinct in Greece, I might be inclined to agree with you," replied the Doctor.

"Nonsense, all Greeks are brigands. I'm going to question our old patriarch before we go any nearer. I wish you hadn't flashed your brass turnip around so much. Have you got your pistol with you? I see I have forgotten mine as usual."

"I have no weapon, not even a pocket knife of any size."

"Ho, old man!" cried Anderson sharply in Greek. "Stop!"

Spiro obeyed and turned around. Ander-

son stepped quickly up to him and seized him firmly by the arm.

"Who are those men?" he asked. "Tell me immediately!"

The old man straightened up a little, and his eyes burned like coals of fire in his hairy cheeks. He replied, calmly, however, shrugging his shoulders very high.

"Who knows? Hunters, probably."

"And what do they hunt here with rifles? Reed birds?"

"Pigs! Wild pigs and deer!" said Spiro, struggling to free himself with more energy than seemed natural in one so old.

Anderson was an American country boy. He had pitched hay and held the plow on his father's farm, and had distinguished himself at his fresh-water college as stroke oar of a racing crew. He had also been a dreaded factor in rushes and foot-ball riots. Shutting his teeth together, he tightened his grip savagely on the old man's arm. What was his surprise when his fingers, instead of sinking into flabby and shriveled flesh, were bruised against muscles so hard that he seemed to grip an iron bar! Spiro straightened himself as though his backbone were a bent bow of

which the string had suddenly been cut, and shooting out two bony hands clutched Anderson by the middle of the back as one lifts a dog. At the same time he seized Brown by the collar and held them both in a grip like that of a gorilla. In the short struggle that ensued his white blouse was torn open, disclosing a belt in which appeared two huge pistols and a long, curved knife. Anderson squirmed wirily out of his own coat and jerked away the pistols.

"Come on, Brown!" he shouted, "before the others get here."

In fact, the three hunters were coming down the mountain road, leaping over the rocks as nimbly as goats. Brown, however, could not come. He was rolling over and over on the ground, with the false guide's arms locked around his waist. Anderson did not dare shoot for fear of hitting his friend. He therefore tossed one of the long pistols in the air, and catching it by the barrel, leaned forward in the act to hit the old man on the head with the butt. Before he could accomplish his object, a rifle cracked, and a bullet took off a lock of his hair. He leaped behind a rock and presented both the pistols.

"I'll kill the first damned one of you who advances an inch!" he shouted, mad with rage. Just so one of his ancestors in the uniform of the old Continentals, had held a stone wall in the days of George Washington. The three brigands halted and held a hurried consultation. Then one of them spoke:

"We will give you just three minutes to throw away those pistols and give yourself up," he said. "If you obey, we will not injure either yourself or your friend. If you refuse, or if you fire a shot, we will blow out your friend's brains."

He took out his watch, opened it and stood looking at its face. The other two raised their rifles and pointed at the head of the unfortunate doctor, who was now lying quietly on his back, with Spiro's bony hands at his throat.

"One minute!"

"God damn you!" screamed Anderson, his lips white and drawn back from his teeth.

"Two minutes!"

"Damn your souls! Cowards! Beggars! Tell me to shoot, Brown! Tell me to shoot! I'll plug two and we'll lick the other two.

Please, please, old man—damn your cowardly soul, tell me to fire!”

“Two minutes and a half! In half a minute I shall give the order to blow your friend’s head off!”

Anderson flung the pistols from him and stepped into the road. He was stone blind with rage, and something whizzed in his ears.

He went up to the Doctor’s prostrate form, from which Spiro had now risen, and would probably have kicked it, but something in the white face shocked him back into sanity.

“I am afraid those gorilla claws of yours have robbed us of our ransom,” said a gruff voice. “If you have killed him, the chief will put a bullet in you.”

There was a red mark about the Doctor’s neck, and the whites of his eyes looked horrible. Anderson fell on his knees by his friend’s side and sobbed like an overgrown boy.

“Forgive me, old man,” he cried, “forgive me!”

CHAPTER V

The American Consul at Athens was sitting in his office, laboring over a long report on the laying of two experimental torpedoes in the Bay of Salamis. At first glance, it may appear that this event was not of sufficient importance to demand an extended report, but the Consul was an extremely conscientious man, who had an exalted idea of the importance of his mission, and who was inspired by extraordinary zeal to distinguish himself. The Consul when at home in his native country was known as the Rev. Israel Q. Burrows, Ph. D., D.D., LL.D. This imposing array of titles, however, did not give him half the pleasure that he experienced when he saw himself addressed on the outside of an envelope as Hon. I. Q. Burrows, United States Consul. But how, the reader may ask, could a man who was so distinguished that his friends wrote half the alphabet after his name, be induced to leave the scene of his

greatness and accept a petty consulship in a foreign land? There is but one answer to such a question: Patriotism. No one could doubt that the Rev. Burrows was a very patriotic man, with a penchant for making the eagle scream on any and all occasions. He had been a Methodist preacher in his younger days and for fully twenty years had journeyed from pillar to post, wrestling with God for souls—a good and earnest man. Wearied at last of dragging his family about the country, he had applied for and obtained the position of professor of mental and moral philosophy in a small denominational college in Michigan. As a professor he had not proved a great success, and a young graduate of the college who had distinguished himself at Yale and afterward in Germany, was available for the ex-preacher's chair. This young graduate was the son of an honorary member of the board, who was at the same time a Congressman.

The Rev. Burrows was therefore asked in an ingenuous way:

“Why don't you apply for a Consulate? Our party is surely coming in next time, and our Congressman is on the right side. If he

takes you up you can get something good. He will have a mortgage on the next administration."

The suggestion took the good man's breath away and threw him into a state of nervous tension for several days. To be a representative of our great and glorious country! To cross the sea and live in a foreign land! To have a complete change and a rest, after so many years of wearisome toil! The thing at first did not seem possible. Why should a Congressman take an interest in him? He was no politician and knew nothing of wire-pulling.

The idea, however, grew upon him. Perhaps the community in which he lived would obtain for him an appointment abroad as a reward for his labors in their midst. He knew nothing of Consular duties, but this did not seem an insurmountable objection. His would be a literary appointment. The author of "Home, Sweet Home," had been a Consul, so had Washington Irving, Bret Harte, William Dean Howells. If he could not serve his country in this new work, he would accomplish the much larger and grander mission of serving humanity. He would turn author,

and write a book, a "Life of Christ," or perhaps an important work on the "Evidences of Christianity" or a "Mental and Moral Philosophy."

He mentioned the subject to his Congressman with considerable fear and trembling, and to his delight found that great man enthusiastic.

"Just the thing, professor! he exclaimed. "Stupid of me not to have thought of it myself. We'll send you to a nice, snug berth, where you can draw a comfortable salary and have a rest. If any man ever deserved a rest, you do. Let's see, how long have you been at the college here?"

"Four years."

"And how many years were you preaching?"

"Twenty."

"Well, it's time you had some reward, and I'll see that you get it. We're coming in now and we're coming in to stay. I'll pull you out a little plum, and you can settle down comfortably for the rest of your days."

The plum was pulled, and the Rev. Burrows was appointed Consul at Athens. Before he departed, the authorities of the little college

got together and gave him every degree in their category.

He had never dreamed of the life which awaited him at Athens. He found himself in a gay capital, where princes, barons, dukes and envoys extraordinary were as thick as preachers at a Methodist camp-meeting. Several incidents occurred early in his career that further accented the deep impression already made upon him. He called upon a real live king, and was affably received by his majesty. It is true that he offered the king his hand with true Western cordiality, and showed his back when leaving the audience chamber; but his majesty had not been surprised at that.

He also visited a man-of-war, and received a salute of seven guns. At the first report he nearly jumped from the boat, and cried:

"Who are they firing at?"

"They are saluting you, sir," said the junior officer who had been sent with him. He thereupon sprang to his feet and made a deep bow at every detonation.

Mr. Burrows soon became impressed with the importance of his position to such an extent that the conviction grew upon him that he ought to perfect himself in his duties.

The "Mental and Moral Philosophy" and the "Life of Christ" grew smaller in his mind. When he tried to fix his attention upon them he seemed to be looking through the large end of an opera-glass. He took up zealously the study of the Consular Regulations, and questioned his colleagues frequently as to questions of social precedent and etiquette. It is true that they often misled him out of a cruel sense of humor, but the good man never knew the difference.

A burning desire to distinguish himself in the service of his country gradually possessed him, and he wrote long and minute reports on every possible subject. He would have preferred to use the telegraph frequently, but he possessed no cipher, and the department disapproved of his first message, announcing that the king had gone to Aix-les-Bains, but that the journey was believed to be of no political significance.

The Hon. I. Q. Burrows was a widower with four children, all girls, the eldest fourteen and the youngest three years of age, at the time of his appointment.

Influenced by the desire of entertaining, he paid successful suit to a pretty French gov-

erness, the teacher of his eldest daughter. Unhappy man! He thereby defeated the very object for which he had reëntered into matrimony; for the false and unchristian aristocracy of a petty European capital would neither call upon his wife nor receive her in their houses, nor did they relent when he sent to America for two negro butlers, one to stand behind his own chair and the other behind his wife's at dinner.

Such was the man who was sitting in his office one day in August, writing a long report to the United States government on the laying of two torpedoes in the Bay of Salamis.

As he was thus engaged the door-bell rang, and the servant ushered into his presence a dapper little Greek who looked like a dandy, despite his soft silk shirt and red necktie. The caller wore dainty boots with high French heels, and his fingers were covered with rings. He lifted a small hat from his glossy, well-oiled locks and said, in a sweet, well modulated voice:

"Your excellency speaks Greek, I suppose?"

The Consul removed his eye-glasses, wiped and replaced them. Then he gazed at his questioner in his most impressive manner.

Noticing that the latter wore a soft shirt, he did not ask him to be seated.

"Enough to be understood," he replied in imperfect Greek, dragging every word with a supreme effort from the recesses of his memory. "What do you wish? Have you any official business with me?"

"Ah, you speak Greek better than the Greeks themselves! Better than I do. You Americans are such a wonderful people! So civilized, so intelligent, so progressive! Whatever you undertake, you accomplish. You must have been here many years to acquire such perfect command of our language."

"Nearly four," replied the Consul, not remembering whether he should use the masculine or neuter numeral and finally getting it wrong.

"Why, this is wonderful! Wonderful! Your pronunciation is not only perfect, but you even express yourself in the most idiomatic manner. None but the Americans would have thought to send here a man who could speak the tongue of the country. Your colleagues do not know a word of our language. The English never can learn it, and the Ger-

mans have such a horrible accent that no one can understand them. But the American representative shows the Greeks themselves how their native tongue should be spoken. Thus do you excel in diplomacy as in all other branches. Truly, a marvelous people!"

Mr. Burrows was highly flattered, and in his most susceptible point.

"Here is a very intelligent gentleman," he thought. "Nevertheless, I must uphold my official dignity." He therefore repeated his former question, though his tone evinced considerable mollification.

"Have you any official business with me?" It should be added, that had Mr. Burrows known more Greek he might perhaps have yielded a little in the matter of dignity. He found it easier to repeat a sentence already formed than to create a new one.

"I came to bring you a message from two young Americans, whom I had the pleasure of accompanying the other day to my native village of Nezeró, where my sainted mother lives. God make me worthy so good a parent!" Here the stranger turned his eyes piously to heaven and crossed himself. "Do you know them? They said their names were



"THIS IS GETTING TO BE A NUISANCE,"
HE GRUMBLED

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Anderson and Brown, members of the American Institute."

"I know them well," replied the Consul. "Where is Nezeró, and why were they there?"

"How marvelously you speak Greek! All the little idioms, and such perfect pronunciation! I knew they were Americans the moment I saw them, from their personal beauty. All Americans are handsome. One with red hair and whiskers—red as fire—blue eyes. The other tall, long-legged, curly hair, white teeth, complexion like a woman's."

The Consul rang his electric bell. This was getting too deep for him. He had never looked up the vocabulary for this particular conversation.

"Tell Miss Minnie to come in here a moment," he said to the boy. His eldest daughter soon after appeared, a blonde, merry, wholesome girl of seventeen, with full lips, red cheeks and a tiptilted nose. All his children, from this one down to the youngest, spoke Greek like natives. Minnie wore a blue dress and sailor hat, and carried a tennis racket in her hand. She looked inquiringly from her father to his visitor.

"This man has something to say about

“Brown and Anderson,” explained the former. “Perhaps you can understand his northern dialect better than I. If he spoke pure Attic, I should, of course, have no difficulty.”

Minnie turned pale and then very red. Turning to the Greek she demanded:

“What have you to say? Has anything happened to Mr. Anderson? And to Dr. Brown?”

The man’s eyes glittered shrewdly as he replied, using no longer the stilted lingo, but the rapid, vivid language with which one Greek talks to another.

“The two young men bade me good-by at Nezeró. They were going to climb Mount Olympus, they said—a very foolish, dangerous thing. By night, too. I was afraid something would happen to them, so I sent a guide with them, the best man in Thessaly, a relative of mine. But the rocks are very high there, and the path runs along steep precipices, hundreds of feet down, down——”

Minnie dropped her racket and clutched blindly at the back of a chair for support.

“So the one called Dr. Brown fell and broke his leg.”

The color flushed back into the girl's face, and she gave a little cry of joy.

"Poor fellow!" she said. "Poor fellow!"

"We have done all we can for him, but he should have a good surgeon. He is lying there at Karyá, among the Turks. What a shame it didn't happen among us Greeks! The difference between us and them is that we are civilized, while they are barbarians. But about the surgeon. His friend has stayed with him, and I have come after the doctor. I have done this because I love the Americans so much. But the young men are poor students, and the surgeon will ask three or four hundred drachmae to go away up there. Who will pay him? I gladly would, because I love the Americans so much. They are all philhellenes. But unfortunately, the young men are poor."

"Nonsense!" cried Minnie. "Dr. Brown is rich. He has a good income, and he is heir to his aunt, who is one of the wealthiest women in Massachusetts. Papa will gladly advance the necessary money, won't you, papa? Dr. Brown will pay it back immediately."

The Greek smiled, and his teeth were very long and white.

"You Americans are so kind," he said. "So noble-hearted!"

In fact the Consul gave the amiable stranger three hundred drachmae without a moment's hesitation, and recorded in his day book:

"Joseph Chandler Brown, Ph. D.——Dr.

"To three hundred drachmae advanced——"

"What is your name, sir?" he asked, glancing at the stranger over his spectacles.

"Emmanuel Christodoulos." (Emmanuel, the servant of Christ.)

"To Emmanuel Christodoulos, for employing surgeon."

"You Americans are so generous!" said Mr. Christodoulos, putting the money carefully in his pocketbook. "I will return immediately with the surgeon. I only hope the young man will not be deformed for life. That fear makes me glad that the shorter and less beautiful one was injured instead of the other. Both are beautiful, of course; but the long-legged one is an Apollo."

"Dr. Brown is the long-legged one," faltered Minnie.

"Ah, well, perhaps I have got their names mixed. It is the red-headed gentleman whose hip is fractured. Is not your daughter ill, Mr. Consul? American ladies are so tender-hearted!" and the amiable Greek bowed himself out.

That evening the American Consul found in his letter-box the following missive, in beautiful Greek script, as plain as type:

HIGHBORN EXCELLENCE: Kindly inform your beautiful daughter, who seems to be much disturbed about the matter, that Messrs. Brown and Anderson are both sound and safe. They are at present in the keeping of some acquaintances of mine who are yearning to deliver them to their anxious friends at the earliest possible moment. My acquaintances merely insist upon one condition, namely, that a small present be given them for trouble and necessary expenses. To avoid confusion, permit me to name a sum, say 50,000 francs in gold. Thanks to information furnished me by your charming daughter, I learn that Dr. Brown's aunt can easily advance this trifling amount. She will doubtless see the justice of the request. You will please communicate with her by telegraph, and she can send the money to you by the same convenient means. If I do not receive this slight gift within a week I shall forward you by mail some trifling portion of Dr. Brown's body, say, one of his ears, as proof of my anxiety to send on the rest. For the 300 drachmæ accept my heartfelt thanks. I

consider them as payment of my traveling expenses to Athens, with a slight margin for amusement. You Americans are so generous! You will be apprised in due time of the method least dangerous to Dr. Brown, by which to hand me the 50,000 francs.

"Yours humbly and sincerely,

"DEMETRIOS TAKIS."

"What on earth does this mean?" soliloquized the Consul. "Perhaps I have not read it right. I'll walk down to Cook's and get the manager to explain to me."

"Mean?" said the handsome, voluble and officious Greek who directs the Athens branch of Thomas Cook's Sons, "it means that those young men are in the hands of the cruelest and shrewdest brigand in Greece. The police have been trying for years to catch him, but it is impossible. It is thought that he has all the villagers and country people near where he lives on his side. He doesn't rob them, you see; he robs wealthy strangers. Indeed, he is very charitable to his own neighbors, and very religious. He has founded a church, and the priest keeps a candle burning night and day for his soul. They say he is in reality a master-shepherd, with many men working for him, and thousands of sheep."

The news soon became noised about that Takis, the terrible brigand of Mount Olympus, had actually been in the American Consulate, and had since written a letter demanding an enormous ransom for two Americans whom he had captured.

In less than half an hour after Mr. Burrows' return to his office, the door bell began to ring continuously, and he received calls from the following persons: representatives of the native press, police officials, emissaries of the government, Reuter's man and the London *Times* correspondent, several consuls and diplomats, besides numerous acquaintances who came out of mere curiosity.

Mr. Burrows had never felt the importance and responsibility of his position as now. Here was a great international matter intrusted to his hands, an affair which would no doubt excite the interest of the world. To one and all he related the circumstances in a sonorous and somewhat ponderous manner, such as he deemed suitable for an official statement, and announced that he would telegraph the matter to the United States government, which would immediately take steps to protect its citizens, even if it became

necessary to send an army of fifty thousand men.

"I tell you, gentlemen," he added, "when any one steps on Uncle Sam's toes, he finds sooner or later that Uncle Sam wears a pretty heavy boot, with hob-nails in the soles."

The Consul telegraphed to the State Department and received no reply. The United States Minister, however, was ordered in a letter which arrived three weeks later to prepare a full statement of the case. His Excellency was at that time absent, and did not return for at least a month after the receipt of the letter. When he did come back, he was nearing the end of his term, and had no hopes of reappointment. He put the letter of the State Department in a pigeon-hole, labeled "Unfinished Business." Here the incident ended diplomatically.

The Director of the Institute held a conference with the Consul.

"I do not believe," said the former, "that the young men are in any personal danger if we manage the affair right. We will open negotiations and try to effect a compromise. As soon as the brigands see that we intend to give them something, they will simply hold

the young men without injuring them. They will ultimately accept much less than ten thousand dollars. One thousand, or perhaps two thousand, will be sufficient."

"And in the meantime," exclaimed Minnie, excitedly, for she was present at the conference, "poor Mr. Anderson will sleep out in the mountains and endure nobody knows what hardships—and so will Dr. Brown. Dr. Brown's aunt ought to send the money immediately. She's a mean old thing if she doesn't."

"Why not demand that the Greek government send a force up there sufficient to surround the brigands and capture them?" asked Mr. Burrows. "They will do it if I threaten them with Uncle Sam's displeasure."

"My dear friend," replied the Director, "let me beg of you not to do that. It would be useless and dangerous. If this arch-brigand has a political pull, the expedition would be a fiasco. If an honest effort at capture were made, our young friends would be massacred. This is brigand etiquette. They never allow their prisoners to be taken alive from them without the payment of a ransom."

"And do you mean to tell me, sir," cried the Consul, grandiloquently, "that the long arms of Uncle Sam do not reach even to the Olympian Mountains? Is our great and glorious government, the most powerful on earth, to be defied by a beggarly crew of cut-throats, half a dozen or so in number?"

"There is only one way," replied the Director, "to deal with all cases of this kind, no matter in what country they may occur. That is, to order the government whose subjects have committed the offense to pay the ransom immediately. Such a course, if universally adopted, would put an end to brigandage throughout the world."

It was finally decided to send the following cablegram to Dr. Brown's maiden aunt:

"SARAH BROWN, East Haddam, Mass.: Joseph captured by brigands. No personal danger. Demand large ransom. Send five thousand dollars. Will compromise and return balance. Have written.

"WILLIAMSON."

One can easily imagine the state of mind into which the dear old lady was thrown on receipt of this message. She replied immediately:

"WILLIAMSON, Athens: Money soon.

"SARAH BROWN."

The money, however, did not come soon, because Aunt Sarah's means were all invested in houses and farms, and it was several weeks before she found herself able to lay her hands on so much cash.

CHAPTER VI

"This will be a glorious sunrise!" cried Anderson, with enthusiasm. The two Americans were sitting in the door of a stone hut on the southern slope of Mount Metamorphosis, one of the minor peaks that surround Olympus like guards standing erect and motionless about a savage chief. As they were high up, they could see much of the Gulf of Salonica in the distance, and the three long points of Chalcidice. Below them the Lake of Nezeró lay dimly, like a mirror that one has breathed upon, and a dozen white villages nestled among the hills. The young men had arisen early to see the sun come out of the ocean, a glorious sight at all times, but indescribably sublime when beheld from a mountain top.

"I say, Meetso, come up with us to the top of that little point yonder. We can see so much better than from here."

Meetso was a tall young brigand in Albanian

costume, with a red handkerchief tied about his head so that it formed a sort of turban, with two ends dangling behind. Two huge pistols and a bone-handled knife adorned his belt, while over his shoulder he carried a short Gras rifle. He was clean shaven, with the exception of a heavy blonde mustache, and was not at all a fierce-looking brigand, for he had an honest, open face, with boyish blue eyes.

Meetso was pacing up and down in front of the stone house, guarding the unfortunate Doctor and his friend.

"What did you say, Effendi?" he asked, facing his questioner, and straightening out his sturdy legs so vigorously that the knee-joints cracked.

"Take us to the top of that hill, that's a good fellow. The view is so much better there than from here. Perhaps the corner of the house will shut off the sun. We want to see it at the exact moment when it pops out of the water."

"Ah, then, you are all right!" cried Meetso, eagerly. "See where that little red place in the sea is, getting redder and redder every moment? That's where it will come out."

I'm so glad you can see it from here, because I have strict orders not to let you out of the house."

"What would you do, now, if we should just calmly walk up there?"

"I should have to follow my orders."

"What are your orders?"

"Do you really want to know? If you try to escape, I am to shoot you and hold your friend. At the sound of the gun others will run up and help me."

"Why is this discrimination made in my favor?" asked Dr. Brown.

"Because you are the rich one, and the Captain expects your relatives to pay for you. But why talk of these things? I love you like brothers. You won't do anything that will force me to hurt you, will you?"

"No, Meetso, we won't, since you put it on those grounds. Of course, we have no earthly personal objection to being shot like dogs or stuck like pigs, but if it would hurt your feelings, why, we'll abstain. But when is the sun coming up?" asked Anderson.

"Look yonder," said Meetso. He was pointing at the supreme summit of Olympus. A long arm of light shot out from behind the

sea and set a crown of fire upon its head. Rapidly the light ran down the sides like molten lava and leaped from peak to peak as when, in a great conflagration, houses catch fire one from the other.

"When it shines on that hill over there," said Meetso, "it will be just peeping from the sea." Even as he spoke and raised his sinewy arm, from which the loose sleeve fell away to the elbow, the victorious Morning shivered a lance on the crest of an old giant, crouching dimly in the shadows. The Americans turned and looked at the sea, and there, where the horizon was reddest, appeared a tiny thread of fire that almost instantly changed into an arc and then into a disc sliding from the water.

"By Jove, that almost repays us for being made to hobnob with a pack of dirty brigands!" exclaimed Anderson.

"It is indeed beautiful," admitted the Doctor. "The sun resembles an Argive mirror, brightly polished, and look, Anderson, doesn't that long slim cloud up there remind you of a Mycenæan sword blade?"

"No; it looks more like a proto-Corinthian donkey punch; which, being translated,

means that you make me very tired, old man. For heaven's sake let the bronzes go for a moment. I say, Meetso, when is the chief expected back? And how much longer are you going to keep up this farce?"

"The chief should be back to-morrow, Effendi; and no doubt he will either bring the money with him, or else he will have found out exactly when it will be paid. We shall be very sorry to part with you. No one can whistle and sing like the red-headed nightingale, and who can play the mouth organ so well?"

"And we shall be deeply sorry to part with you," said Anderson. "I presume we shall make you a visit every summer about this time."

The village where the Doctor and his friend now found themselves, if the term "village" can be applied to a few tumbledown stone cabins and a number of brush huts, was one of the highest shepherds' stations on Mount Metamorphosis, and was situated within a convenient distance of the Turkish line. As it was now the height of summer, the goat-herds and shepherds had moved to the more elevated regions, where the pasturage was

freshest and greenest. At the first fall of snow, or even earlier, it would be necessary for them to get their flocks together and move to another station lower down.

If they do not make haste, their houses are completely snowed under before they can get out of them, and their herds perish. The same community, therefore, generally owns two, and sometimes three villages.

The house in which Brown and Anderson were stopping was built of cobblestones and covered with a tile roof. It contained a single room, at one end of which the fire was built of logs and brush, the smoke being allowed to escape, when it wished, through a hole in the roof. The fireplace was flanked on either side by a low platform of boards, which served for beds at night and for chairs and tables during the day. On one of these platforms our two friends had slept for the past week. Two brigands reposed nightly on the other, ready to relieve by turns a third, who acted as sentinel at the door, or to assist him in case the prisoners attempted to escape.

In justice to the Greeks it must be said that they treated their enforced guests with the greatest kindness, and did all possible in their

rough way to make them comfortable. They brought them skins to lie upon at night, and an old woman came and cooked their food; this was generally goat stew, made in a huge kettle which hung over the fire, suspended from a hook driven in the wall. The shepherds also fetched them warm milk and dainty bits of cheese, watching them while they ate, and solicitously asking their opinion of every mouthful. Their nocturnal guards, at Dr. Brown's earnest request, even abstained from garlic—a great concession on the part of Greek rustics.

"I'll tell you what, Meetso," declared Anderson one night, "I'll write an ad for your gang and put it in the Athens papers. I'll recommend you to all travelers desirous of passing a few days among gentlemanly and attentive brigands. Don't poke that cussed fire so much, though, or we'll both choke to death, and then where will your ransom be?"

The prisoners were lodged in the stone hut, partly for comfort and partly for security.

On the third day their guards took them for a walk about the town, and allowed them to look into some of the curious brush huts. These were constructed by sticking four

posts in the ground and by closing in the sides with leafy branches. The roofs and doors were made of skins. Within each of these primitive houses slept a family, generally numerous, together with two or three favorite animals and the poultry. Gourds for various uses, besides a few culinary implements of copper, hung from convenient limbs. Brown and Anderson were not a little surprised at the number of wild, nearly naked, shaggy-headed children that each of these inhabited brush-heaps contained.

It was one of the kindnesses shown them that they were relieved from the intolerable staring after the second day.

"Isn't this driving you crazy, Anderson?" Brown asked. "Wherever I look I see from two to half a dozen eyes riveted upon me. All with the same expression, too—yearning curiosity and ignorant wonder. Nor do I dare move; if I run my fingers through my hair, half a dozen urchins tumble over each other to see what I am doing and why I do it."

"Even here the philosopher may reap a wise reflection," replied Anderson. "The blasé and pampered children of America could

not get as much real fun out of a fairy play as any of these brats can realize from an ordinary foreigner. Imagine, old man. Here we find ourselves a bigger attraction than a one hundred thousand dollar Cinderella show. Since their innocent curiosity makes you nervous, however, we'll ask Meetso to restrain it."

Which Meetso did, with a club.

As the captives did not attempt to escape during their first promenade, they were taken about the camp each day and allowed to watch the milking and the butter and cheese-making. The numerous gaunt, shaggy dogs in which the place abounded, and which had seemed determined to tear them in pieces on their arrival, soon learned that the strangers had come to stay, and became friendly.

The Americans were much struck with the intelligence of these dogs. In a little valley near by was an immense brush corral, into which the goats were driven at night. As the different herds were brought up, the dogs all united in driving them together into this corral; when they were separated from each other in the morning to be taken off in different directions to pasturage, each dog knew his own goats, and never made a mistake.

At night a number of the shepherds, and even some of the women crowded into the stone hut, when Anderson would play on his mouth organ for the others to sing, or would himself sing some college glee in a fine bass voice. Even the Doctor became interested when his fellow-captive attempted to translate into modern Greek:

“There was a man who had two sons,
There was, there was,
And that’s the way the story runs,
It does, it does.”

As the days of their captivity dragged on, one following the other with tiresome sameness, the Doctor grew inconsolable. Nothing could divert his mind from his precious bronzes, which he was sure were being so thickly coated with a deposit of zinc that not an inscription would be visible. He sat on the side of his bunk with his face in his hands, or gazed fixedly at the fire, which their elevated position rendered necessary much of the time, imagining every ember an antique knife blade or polished mirror handle.

“Ransom, indeed!” he grumbled repeatedly. “These brutes should pay me damages. What will become of my theory concerning

the local origin of Argive art? The fruit of years of earnest toil and patient investigation is in danger of being ruined by the cupidity of a few ignorant and lawless boors!"

One of the most prominent personages in the community was a fine old mountaineer, about sixty years of age, yet as hale and hearty as a man of forty. His white woolen jacket, reaching to the knees, was belted around his waist by a bit of cord, and was open at the throat, exposing a Herculean expanse of hairy chest. His skin-tight leggings displayed a pair of sturdy calves that it would have been a shame to hide in loose trousers. His hair was gray, but still luxuriant, and the black silk handkerchief tied about his brow brought into pleasing contrast the ruddy hue of his cheeks. Uncle Pavlos carried a heavy stick that he had a habit of making whistle through the air as he walked, solely for the purpose of giving vent to the overflowing strength in his sinewy right arm. His eyes were gray, shrewd, and kindly, and the wrinkles about them only added to their pleasant expression.

Uncle Pavlos was the master shepherd.

He came in very often to talk with the pris-

oners, and his conversation proved him a man of more than ordinary intelligence, though illiterate, and of a sympathetic as well as a jolly disposition. He appreciated Anderson's comic songs and stories, his loud laugh roaring out above all the din in the hut; on the other hand, he often came by day to inquire after the Doctor's health and to ascertain, if possible, the cause of his sadness.

"Are you married, my son?" he asked one day.

"No."

"Engaged? There's a sweetheart, may be? Ah, that's it. Never mind, you'll be out of this soon, I hope, and then you can see her again. As soon as the chief comes back he will surely set you loose."

"If you're so interested in our welfare why don't you free us?" asked the Doctor one day. "You're the principal man here, and you don't look like a brigand."

"I'm neither a brigand, my son, neither have I any sympathy with this sort of thing. As for setting you loose, however, that I cannot do."

"And why not, pray? Are you afraid of the brigands?"

"In a way, yes, though I am not a coward. There are many of us shepherds who would gladly get rid of them if we could. But who would dare have a brigand chief for an enemy? Who knows what terrible vengeance might be meted out to him? They have so many friends in the mountains, too, that it is impossible to tell who are honest and who are not. They do not rob us, you see; they rob strangers and give dowries to our daughters and presents to our churches. Who would protect the honest shepherd that opposed the brigands?"

On the first Sunday of their captivity the Americans were conducted to the brigands' church, whither they were accompanied by the women of the camp and as many of the men as could leave. The Doctor and Anderson were mounted on donkeys led by boys. Meetso and Spiro, both armed to the teeth, came along as guards.

"We bring you to church," said the former, "because we know it would please the chief. He gave the money for this church, and is a very religious man. A shepherd girl had a herd of goats, and among them all was one little white lamb. She fell asleep one day



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under a tree, and dreamed that where that little lamb was sleeping she would find buried an image of the Virgin, and that a famous Klepht chieftain would give the money to build a church there. So she drove her staff into that very spot and went down to the village and told Kyriakoula Takis about it, our chief's beautiful daughter; and Kyriakoula got a shovel and the two went there and dug, and sure enough they found a most beautiful image of the Virgin there. Kyriakoula told her father, and he gave the money, and was very glad to do it."

"Whom does this Virgin particularly patronize?" asked Anderson. "The brigands?"

"The mountain people, the shepherds especially."

"But does she patronize the brigands?" persisted Anderson. "Before you started out after us, did you pray to this Virgin to help you?"

"Of course we did! Why not? And was not our expedition crowned with success? You ought to be very glad that you have an opportunity to go to church to worship God with us Christians. Do you have any churches in America?"

"I don't remember now. I believe there is one in New York. How is that, Brown? Are there any churches in your part of the country?"

"Hey?"

"Wake up there! What are you dreaming about?"

"I was thinking about that inscription to Hera on that mirror handle. There's a little chunk of zinc over the very word that is the key to the whole thing. If I chipped off the metal with a fine chisel, I wonder if the letters would still show, or would they come away, too?"

A picturesque procession they made, the women in clean white jackets and skirts, with three-cornered embroidered handkerchiefs of various colors tied about their heads. There were several donkeys, upon whose backs children had been stuck, three or four in a bunch, like clothespins on a line. The serious, patient animals shuffled down the rocky path in a loose-kneed amble, seeming always to stumble, but never doing so. Four or five of the men carried guns, the remainder shepherds' crooks. Their head covering also consisted of brightly-colored handkerchiefs tied

in a hard knot behind, with the ends dangling loose. The faces of the women were sunburned, wrinkled, and masculine; but where one was nursing a baby, or where a bit of flesh peeped out from an open jacket the skin looked soft and white as milk.

"Do you not find our women very beautiful, Effendi?" asked Meetso.

"Ravishingly so," replied Anderson.

"Ah! I thought you would say so! But wait till you see Kyriakoula. There is not another such beautiful creature on earth. She is straight and tall as a cypress tree, her skin is white as fresh cheese, her eyes are as bright as a young goat's!"

"Be careful, Meetso. You'll be losing your heart next."

"And what young man on all Olympus has not lost his heart to Kyriakoula? But it's no use. She'll not so much as look at one of us, neither would her father allow her to marry a poor mountaineer. 'Tis his love for this girl that has led him to capture you. He wants to get an immense dowry for her, and then marry her to some great man."

"By Jove, Doc! this ought to interest even you. We are going to see the real cause of

all our trouble, a girl so stunningly beautiful that she knocks any man's heart out in the first round."

"Were she as beautiful as Hera," replied the Doctor, "she would be hateful to me, if she is indeed the cause of my being kept away from my bronzes so long."

Two hours' travel brought the party to a little stone church, in front of which a throng of villagers had already gathered.

"Now, remember," whispered Meetso, "my orders. I wish to give you as much liberty as possible here, because it would not look well to use violence in the house of God."

"You seem well grounded in religious principles, Meetso," observed Anderson.

The amiable young brigand did not hear this remark, for his attention was attracted by the approach of a man and young girl, both seated upon donkeys. From the interest which this couple excited, it was evident that they were people of importance among the mountaineers. As they drew nearer, the fact became still more apparent from the richness of their dress, from the expensive trappings of the donkeys, and from the sleek, well-fed condition of the animals themselves. On

one of the donkeys sat a slight, undersized man of middle age, dressed in Albanian costume. He was so immaculate, the embroidery upon his vest and sleeves so heavy, and the ruffles upon his shirt-front so dainty, that Anderson was forced to exclaim:

"By Jove, here comes an Albanian dude!"

His two pistols and his knife handle were heavily mounted in silver. Upon his head he wore a little red fez, adorned with a tassel that danced in the wind. The other beast carried a burden of which he might well be proud—a tall, well-proportioned girl of eighteen, who sat very erect and bore herself with a certain haughtiness of demeanor, and withal a certain fierceness, as a savage queen might have done. To this effect her costume added, while at the same time it enhanced her really splendid beauty.

"I say, Brown, isn't she a beaut?" whispered Anderson; "kind of a cross between a wild rose and a tigress—sleek skin, perfume, thorns, and claws. Help me remember her features, now, to describe her to the fellows when we get back to the Institute. Oval face, dark-gray eyes, wide apart, two braids of chestnut hair that hang clean below the sad-

dle, complexion dark but clear, perfect Greek nose, lips a little too thick, and red as strawberries—I say, aren't we glad we came!"

"She is indeed a fine type," admitted the Doctor. "In profile she'd do very well for a Hera, though a front view makes her face a little too round—except the forehead, that's perfect. I've a profile something like hers on a bronze tripod."

While thus talking they stood among a group of Greeks, all of whom were gazing with much deference at the great man and his fair companion.

"It's the chief," whispered Meetso, "and Kyriakoula. "Isn't she the most beautiful woman on earth?"

The chief dismounted and followed the priest into the church. As he took off his hat and reverently crossed himself, the Americans noticed that he was quite bald. Kyriakoula joined the women and went in with them.

"See how she moves!" said Anderson. "Where's your artistic sense, man? That sort of sleek, easy, and yet powerful action that you see among animals only in a yearling cat that's not overfed. There's something about



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her which reminds me of the headless Victory by Pæonius. I'll bet Pæonius had something to do with the making of her."

"She's a little too slender for Pæonius," objected the Doctor, arranging his eye-glasses with the thumb and forefinger of his right hand.

"Well, perhaps, if you wish to be mathematically accurate, though I'll warrant he would be satisfied with her. She's graceful enough, at any rate, to make him green with envy."

"Aren't her feet and hands a trifle large?"

"Not for the old idea of perfection. Small hands and feet are a modern idea. See how beautiful they are, too!"

Meanwhile the old priest had commenced the service, and was chanting it in that nasal sing-song so dear to priests of every persuasion. No part of the congregation was more devout than the brigands, the chief crossing himself and leading the responses with great unction, like a veritable pillar of the church.

During the service Dr. Brown stood near a window, his long legs raising him head and shoulders above those about him. A golden ray of sunshine pierced the clouds of incense

and brought out his pale, delicate features and his crown of thick curls. To one standing in a darker part of the church, his head seemed floating in a sort of poetic mist. His sad, pensive air also added to his romantic aspect, for the Doctor did not hear a word of the liturgy. His mind was in his bronze pots. "Would Michali take the fragments out in time, or would he not? If he did, would he remember to wax them?"

This last seeming impossible, the Doctor heaved a deep sigh.

"I shan't get away from here," he thought, "before they are all ruined. I have worked years to get everything ready for my book, and now I am to be robbed of the victory! It's a shame, a burning shame!"

While he was thus reflecting, he felt that a pair of eyes were riveted upon his face—were drawing his own toward them.

"Anderson may enjoy being made a curiosity of," he murmured, "but I do not. Not even in the presence of their God do these cut-throats forget their ill-manners. I will be disdainfully unconscious."

Having formed this manly resolution, his mind again reverted to the bronzes, and for a

moment he forgot the staring eyes, but they did not cease their influence, and they caught him unawares. Unconsciously he turned his head, and realized with a guilty start that the chief's daughter was looking fixedly at him. Instantly she cast down her eyes, but as soon as he tried again to fix his mind on the bronzes he felt the same influence drawing his head around. After service the chief spoke a few words in a low tone to Meetso and rode away with his daughter.

"He's coming to see us to-night," said Meetso, on the way back to camp, "and then we shall hear about your ransom. Isn't Kyriakoula beautiful? I could commit murder for that girl! I could do anything, so she were mine for one day only, and then I'd be willing to die afterward."

"You have got it bad, my boy," said Anderson.

"Why did the girl stare at me so in church?" asked Dr. Brown, in English. "She nearly bored her eyes through me. I couldn't get away from them. Is there anything peculiar about my appearance?"

"Eh, what's that?" asked Anderson, with sudden interest.

"I say, that of all the curious, inquisitive Greeks we've seen this girl is the worst. Every time I looked up during the services inside I found her staring at me. I must say, though, that she seemed to have some sense of decency, for she did not continue to stare when I returned her gaze, neither did she keep her mouth open as the others do. I thought once that she even blushed as she looked away, as though conscious that she had been detected in a rude performance."

The Doctor removed his eye-glasses and blew a thin mist over their surface. After wiping them carefully with his handkerchief, he replaced them upon the bridge of his nose and looked inquiringly into his companion's face. Anderson was silent for some time. Evidently the Doctor's revelation had impressed him deeply. Once or twice he laughed to himself, and once he slapped his knee as though to emphasize some particularly entertaining thought.

"By Jove, Doc!" he exclaimed at last. "If you weren't such an old stick about some matters, I could find a way out of the woods."

"I don't understand you," replied the Doctor.

"I know devilish well you don't. I only wish I was in your boots, though. Why wasn't I given a pair of stork's legs, a 'Pade-roosky' head of hair and a face like Narcissus with the bellyache? Then might I look stately, sad, and poetic, and capture the hearts of savage maidens!"

"I hope your troubles are not turning your brain, Anderson; your talk is certainly wild and rambling."

"Look here, Brown. Did you ever hear of plowing with a heifer?"

The Doctor regarded his friend with actual alarm. "Because if you haven't, it's the easiest thing on earth. Many seemingly impossible difficulties have been overcome by the timely appearance of a heifer. Which, being translated, means that the chief's daughter has fallen in love with you at first sight, and there is no reason why we shouldn't work her in some way to get us out of this scrape. I'm getting tired of goat stew."

The Doctor removed his hat and ran his long, slim fingers through his hair. "I don't see what leads you to believe that the girl is in love with me," he replied.

"I'm about as certain of the fact as I am

that your first name is Joseph. Here in Greece, where young people are allowed no liberties of courting, and where a girl's reputation is ruined if she speaks to a young man, lovers have no means of expressing their feelings except through the eyes. You see, I have been studying this branch a little, while you've entirely neglected it. If you ever get back to Athens, try to catch a girl's eye. Never in the world will you be able, unless she means to say something to you with it. On the other hand, when a girl really stares at you, you may be sure she means to say: 'I want you, my honey, yes I do, but I'm a poor weak female, who dassent say my soul's my own. You go and see papa and mama and fix the thing up. As for me, nobody could be willinger than I am.' Take my word for it, the heifer has presented herself. The only question now is, how shall the plowing be done? To this problem, old man, your uncle George now proposes to devote the tremendous energies of his mighty brain.

The more Anderson studied over this idea the more attractive it became.

"By Jove," he thought, "if we could beat this old cut-throat at his own game, and get

away without paying a cent, what a lovely thing it would be! It may be our only chance, too, to get off without some rough treatment. The brigands are using us all right now, but what will they do when the ransom is not forthcoming? Probably the chief has asked some enormous amount, and the old aunt will hate like the devil to cough it up. I'd be blown if I'd do it, either, if I were she. As for me, there's nobody on earth would pay a cent to get me out of purgatory—no, I oughtn't to say that, either. I guess Minnie Burrows would help me if she could, though she is such a little flirt. But she hasn't got a cent on earth. When the ransom doesn't come, these devils will begin to cut off our ears and noses and to send us in piecemeal to our friends as a sort of stimulant to their generosity. If there is such a hullabaloo made that the fool Government sends troops, the brigands will kill us, as they did those Englishmen at Marathon. If this girl is mashed on Brown, we can get out of here. These Albanian women are perfect devils when they get started, and will stop for nothing."

CHAPTER VII

After they were safely lodged again in their prison, Anderson asked, "Brown, have you thought of any plan yet?"

"No. To tell you the truth, your idea seems perfectly preposterous. Why, we shall never see the girl again."

"Ah, that's exactly what I wanted to speak to you about. If I am right, as I know I am, she'll be here to-night with the old man. You heard what Meetso said. That girl is the apple of her father's eye, and I'll warrant she can twist him around her finger. Now, for heaven's sake, old man, encourage her. Make love to her just a little, and she'll do the rest."

"But how? I have never made love to a woman in my life, and am not used to paying compliments and that sort of thing. Why don't you do it? Why do you ask me to do something that you can carry out so much better than I?"

"Vicarious love-making? That never worked and never will."

"No, not vicarious. You tell her that you love her, and all the rest of it."

"Yes, and she'd probably knock my head off, or tell her amiable pa to stick a knife into me. No, thanks!"

"Why, then, do you wish me to undertake something that you are afraid to do yourself?"

"Oh, in your case there'll be no danger. Women who are most indignant over the wrong fellow's advances are most enthusiastic with the right one. Now I'll tell you; when she comes to-night, just keep your eyes fixed on her. Try to look as much like a dying calf as possible. If she looks away, don't you do the same. Let her find your eyes riveted on her every time she glances in your direction. If she smiles, you smile a little—very sadly, like a man who is about to be hanged, trying to cheer up his mother. Keep thinking about your bronzes all the time—that'll make you look sad."

"Well," replied the Doctor, "if you think this plan will assist in any way in my getting back to my bronzes I'll try it. There's noth-

ing very difficult in making love, if it only consists in staring."

"That's one way it's done. There are also others."

The prisoners had hardly finished their dinner that evening before Meetso announced, in a state of great excitement:

"They're coming! They're coming! The chief, and Kyriakoula with him! Oh, why didn't I know, that I might have put on my clean fustanellas and my embroidered jacket? There are holes in these shoes, too. Bah! how red and dirty my toes look! I believe I shall sink through the earth."

There was a jingling of stirrups and bridles outside, and the chief was heard talking with Meetso.

"That's strange!" said Anderson. "I think I know that voice. I believe our old friend, the voluble guide of Deréli has come along."

"There are only two of them," observed Brown, who was standing at the door.

A moment later the chief looked in, bowing and smiling. His daughter stood behind, towering a full head and shoulders above him.

"I shouldn't find it a disagreeable task to make love to her," thought Anderson. She



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had attired herself with even more barbaric splendor than in the morning at church. Her white woolen jacket, embroidered in red silk and gold, fitted neatly, showing the perfect modeling of arms and shoulders and the graceful inward curve of her back. Her bodice of white silk, richly embroidered with threads of pure silver, was drawn snugly over the high, firm bosom. Two silver clasps of antique Byzantine workmanship fastened this garment at the waist. Her skirt, also white, fell only to her shapely ankles, and was adorned as high as the knees with broad rings of red and black embroidery. A couple of inches of petticoat showed beneath, so narrow that it made her walk mincingly, and resembled Turkish trousers. The jaunty little red fez served rather to call attention to her wealth of glossy brown hair than to hide it.

"I suppose I must begin," soliloquized Brown, looking at her fixedly and thinking of his bronzes. "She may be the means to an end."

"Well, gentlemen, are you quite comfortable?" asked the little brigand, removing his fez from a very bald head. "I am sure my people would do everything in the world for

you. They do not require any orders from me to treat you with the greatest care, and even distinction. It is sufficient for them to know that you are Americans. Americans are so enlightened, so philhellenic! All Greeks love Americans."

Anderson noticed that the speaker's hands were covered with rings, and that when he smiled his upper lip curled back from teeth that were very long and white, like a wolf's.

"Well, I'll be damned!" ejaculated Anderson. Even the Doctor forgot for a moment the melancholy stare and the Argive bronzes.

"And I have brought also my daughter Kyriakoula, whom I have the honor of presenting to you. She also has heard of the Americans—such beautiful and intelligent men!—and desires to seize this opportunity of meeting two of them face to face. May we come in, gentlemen? May we make trial of the celebrated American hospitality?"

Anderson sprang to his feet, and bowed low with mock politeness. The Doctor slowly followed the example.

"Regard our house as your own," said Anderson. "Will you and your beautiful daughter be seated? I am sorry we have no

chairs to offer you. You will consider, I hope, rather the spirit of our welcome than the means at our disposal."

The chief turned to his daughter with a triumphant smile.

"Did I not tell you, my Kyriakoula, that the Americans were the politest and best hearted of men? No wonder that we Greeks love them!"

Saying which, he sat down on one of the platforms and Kyriakoula took a place at his side. Brown and Anderson seated themselves opposite. Anderson stepped on the Doctor's toe.

"How did you lose your hair and whiskers?" suddenly asked Anderson. The chief smiled.

"You Americans are so intelligent! Nothing escapes you. I have simply removed them. They are merely part of my dress. The climate changes so in this mountainous country, with the differing altitudes that even a few moments' walk brings one into, that I usually wear an extra amount of hair when traveling. It prevents me from catching cold."

"A wise precaution, indeed!"

"I am so glad it meets with your approval! And now, gentlemen, I feel it my duty to

tell you without delay that I have news from your friends in Athens. It would be absolutely cruel to keep you in suspense. I have seen His Excellency, the American Consul. A most courteous and intelligent man! I've seen also his daughter—"

"Which one?" interrupted Anderson.

"Now, what was her name? Really, I was so dazzled by her attractions and her wit that her name for the moment escapes me."

"Minnie?"

"The very same! How remarkable! You Americans have such wonderful memories! This young lady informed me that Dr. Brown's aunt is immensely wealthy. This is extremely fortunate, as she will be able to make my people a slight present for the expense and trouble they have incurred in your behalf. Not that they would complain of any trouble, but they are poor people and I am sure you would not wish to go away without requiting them. Americans are so generous! It would be indelicate toward you to allow you to do so."

"Did you tell Miss Minnie that we were in the hands of brigands?" asked Anderson.

"My dear friends! I beg of you! You are in the hands of your friends. I was afraid

Miss Minnie would have that very impression, so I told her a little fib. I told her that the red-headed gentleman had fallen from a precipice and shattered his hip. It was poor judgment of me, for the dear girl nearly fainted away—"

"You infernal villain!" cried Anderson, leaping to his feet. "You lying, grinning, cowardly devil!"

"Be calm, my young friend, be calm," said the chief, putting out his left hand, while his right stole softly to the grip of a silver-mounted pistol. "Sit down, I beg of you. Violent emotion is not healthful. It sometimes causes sudden death by apoplexy, and in other ways. Of course, I corrected the impression soon afterwards. The interesting point is that Miss Minnie seemed very anxious that Mr. Brown's wealthy relative should send the necessary funds immediately, and she will no doubt use her influence to that end."

Anderson sat down again.

"How much money do you want?" asked the Doctor.

"Shut up," whispered Anderson in English, "and keep on staring. You're harnessing the heifer."

"I have suggested the ridiculous sum of fifty thousand francs. I waited for it in Athens, in fact, supposing that such a mere bagatelle would be sent me immediately by telegraph. Imagine my surprise when this letter was handed to my messenger Friday evening!" Anderson seized the letter and read:—

"DEMETRIOS TAKIS; SIR: This is to inform you that the wealth of Mr. Brown's aunt was greatly overestimated by my daughter. She finds it absolutely impossible to raise the enormous sum you mention, a sum which seems to me ridiculous even from your standpoint. We cannot believe that you have the heart to injure either of these young men, however much you may threaten to do so, and we are certain that they will become a burden to you sooner or later. We are willing, however, to pay you a large amount for their immediate release and to agree to take no steps towards bringing you to justice. I will advance one thousand dollars or five thousand francs on my own responsibility, on condition that the young men be immediately set free. More than this you will never get. If you do not comply with these terms, I shall ask the Greek Government to send troops after you and to set a price on your head.

—"Keep a weather eye out for the old man and keep staring, Doc. You're doing great work—"

"ISRAEL Q. BURROWS,

"U. S. Consul."

It is needless to say that the last sentence was not part of the letter, but was interpolated by the ingenious Anderson without changing tone or looking up from the sheet.

"Well, my friend, I suppose you have the five thousand in your pocket, and have come to set us free? Perhaps we may even hope for the pleasure of your entertaining and instructive society back to Deréli? I wish I could make a thousand dollars so easily!"

The chief smiled. "You are ironical," he said. "I thought you would regard the mention of so small a sum as a personal insult to yourself."

"May I ask then," said Brown, turning to the brigand chief, "how long you intend to keep us here? I am engaged in philological researches which this imprisonment has interrupted. Do you know, are you capable of understanding, that you are retarding the progress of science?"

"Don't be a chump, Doc!" interrupted Anderson, hurriedly, in English. "Attend to your work. What does he care about your bronzes? Try a sigh or two and a sickly smile."

Changing to Greek, he continued: "I was

just explaining to my friend here that he must address your Highness with more deference, because, although we meet under such unfavorable circumstances, we realize that you are a gentleman of culture and of distinction in your peculiar line. May I venture to ask if you have not accepted the thousand dollars, what you intend to do with us? I am sure you will get no more. The Consul's letter is final. You see it is on official paper and bears the stamp."

"These business matters are so annoying among friends!" exclaimed Takis. "Still I feel it my duty to keep you informed of the progress of negotiations, as you are indirectly interested, to say the least. I have dispatched another letter to Athens, extending the time of payment two weeks. I fear," and here he sighed deeply, "that I have allowed my playfulness to get me into a little difficulty, unless your amiable relatives come to the rescue. I said in my first letter, in pure playfulness, of course, that if fifty thousand francs were not sent within a week I would cut off one of Dr. Brown's ears."

"Eh?" cried the Doctor, whirling about quickly.

"Don't worry, Doc. She's looking at you like a hungry pup at a bone. When I get the old man's attention, roll your eyes at her sidewise and heave a deep sigh.—You see this troubles my friend. I am impressing upon him that you made this threat in pure playfulness."

"Which is very true. But alas! I never for a moment dreamed that your friends would refuse the small favor that I asked. Their refusal places me in a cruel predicament. I have given my word, the word of a Greek gentleman, which is inviolable, as all the world knows. If at the end of two weeks the fifty thousand francs are not forthcoming, I shall actually be obliged to put my playful threat into execution. If you knew how this dilemma distresses me, you would feel sorry for me, both of you."

"We do! we do!" said Anderson.

"Your kind-heartedness does you great credit. I will leave paper, pen, and ink here. Will you do me a favor? Will you write to your friends, asking them to relieve me from this cruel dilemma? You can say that you are certain that I will carry out my word if the money is not here within the given time.

Have the letter ready early in the morning, and I will dispatch it at my own expense. And now, gentlemen, good night. We shall remain here for a few days, and if you are not quite comfortable let me know. Don't be afraid to make complaints. Oh, by the way, your little remark about brigands has distressed me greatly. I will take charge of all your valuables, that they may not serve as a temptation to any of my people. Meetso!" The young brigand stepped forward with alacrity.

"Behold me, Effendi!"

"Take the gentlemen's watches and purses and give them to me for safe-keeping."

"You won't get much of a haul out of me this trip," said Anderson, passing out a Waterbury and a purse containing fifty drachmas.

"My money you can have," said the Doctor, "but my watch is a present, and I will not give it up."

"It is its value, my dear friend, which renders me so anxious to see that no harm comes to it. My wishes here must be observed. Will you hand it quietly to Meetso, or shall I order it to be taken from you?"

The Doctor reluctantly gave up his Howard watch.

"Bad luck go with it," said Anderson. "That's the hoodoo that got us into this scrape."

As Takis passed out of the dingy room ahead of his daughter, the latter glanced back over her shoulder at the Doctor, flashing a brief smile at him.

"By the gods, Doc," exclaimed Anderson, as soon as they were alone, "if it wasn't for that girl I'd feel dubious about the situation! But I consider that that last look she gave you just settled the thing. Your uncle George must now find some means of communicating with the fair brigand. I see plainly that the love-making must be done by letter. I'll do the composing, because I fancy I am a little better at this sort of thing than you. I'll make it so hot that we'll have to wet the paper every few minutes to keep it from catching fire."

"Isn't there danger of my involving myself if I go into this thing too deeply?" asked the Doctor. "I have always avoided women, as they tend to distract a man's attention and prevent deep scholarship. If she should fol-

low me to Athens and try to persecute me there—”

“My dear Doctor, the question now before the assembly is whether your ears shall continue sticking to your head or not! This Takis is an old fiend, and I begin to feel genuine nervousness as to our personal safety. We’ll write this letter he asks for, and until he hears from that I don’t think we have much to fear. Of course, when it comes to the ear-cutting business—to the actual performance—I shall insist that we draw lots. Our friends wouldn’t know one of your ears from one of mine. In the mean time, however, I shall make no such proposition. If it ever occurred to the girl that by having me sliced up she could keep you here a month or so longer, why she’d say, ‘Slice away.’ It’s to save your beautiful features from mutilation that I hope to make her betray her dad.”

CHAPTER VIII

Later in the evening Meetso came in, attired in his best and carrying a small stringed instrument in his hands, a sort of crude guitar.

"Hello, Meetso, old boy!" shouted Anderson, heartily. "Why all these feathers?"

"Am I not beautiful?" asked the brigand, ingenuously. "There is not a handsomer man on Mount Olympus than I am, perhaps not in all Thessaly. I shall wear these fine clothes all the time that Kyriakoula remains here, and I shall again tell her of my love. She can't resist me; I shall talk to her so beautifully, and I shall look so fine and noble."

"What are you doing with the saucepan?"

"Saucepan? This a saucepan? Holy Virgin! It is a Thessalian guitar. There is no instrument in the world that makes such beautiful music. Do you have musical instruments in America like this?"

"We do have things that we pick out tunes

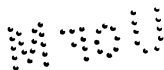
on. I bought my mouth organ in New York. I frankly confess, though, that we have nothing in my country like the instrument which you have there."

"Ah, I thought not. You see we Greeks are the most civilized people in the world. I have told Kyriakoula that I shall serenade her to-night. You shall hear me. She sleeps in that house over yonder, in the same room with old Widow Valiorettes, who cooks your food. Do you see that rock over there in the moonlight? There I shall stand and sing a beautiful song about a shepherd girl. This is the attitude I will strike. Look at me! Am I not romantic, irresistible? You must look out and see me, and then you will understand why Kyriakoula can no longer resist me."

"I assure you, Meetso," said Anderson, solemnly, "that but to see you is to love you. By the way, in talking to Kyriakoula, do you ever call her any pet names? We Americans call our girls all sorts of pretty things—honey, chicken, ducky—let's see, Doc, do we call our girls any other kind of poultry?"

"Eh?" said the Doctor, looking up suddenly.

"Oh, rats. As I was saying: Chicky, ducky,



tootsey-wootsey, peaches, and so on. I don't suppose you Greeks have any nice names for your girls, eh?"

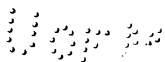
"How mistaken you are, Effendi! We call them a thousand beautiful and sweet things. My eyes, my soul, my life, my heart, my little bird, cold water—"

"Cold water?"

"Why, certainly! What does a man desire more, when he hasn't it, than water? And what is more delicious than cold water?"

"Thanks, Meetso, old boy! If I ever make love to one of your countrywomen I'll remember these things."

During the evening, pen, ink, and paper were brought and the Americans were left alone to prepare the letter which Takis had outlined to them. The Doctor undertook the construction of this missive, while Anderson furtively employed his fountain pen in writing a communication to the fair Kyriakoula. The contents of the former epistle were substantially as follows: The Americans said that they believed, from what they had seen and heard of Takis, that he would actually resort to mutilation of their bodies if the full sum demanded were not produced within the time



specified. Anderson's effusion was written in Greek. Here is a translation of it:

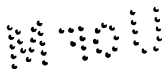
"Kyriakoula, my soul! My life! I love you, I adore you. I begin thus, because it seems perfectly natural to address you thus. Who that had eyes and a heart could help loving you? You are as sweet and beautiful as cold water. How glad I am your father brought me here! When he talks of cutting off my ears, I only laugh. Let him cut me all to pieces, so he only leaves me eyes to look at you with! I had to-night a faint hope that perhaps you pitied me. You must have read my love in my eyes. Forgive me, my little bird, if I seemed rude to you; I could not help feasting my eyes on your beautiful face. Oh, if you could only love me, my heart! my life! my soul! Then I would fear nothing. I will try to find some means to send this to you, and if you do not answer me one sweet little word, you are more cruel than your father, though he should cut me all in pieces. Oh, how I love you, my life, my heart, my eyes!

"THE TALL ONE."

"How'll this do?" asked Anderson, handing the above tender epistle to his friend.

The Doctor read the billet-doux through with much interest.

"I consider the modern Greek a legitimate dialect," he observed, in a scholastic tone, regarding Anderson over the tops of his



glasses, "and as such I am greatly interested in it. I must compliment you on your style. If you will permit me, however, to point out one or two grammatical errors—"

"Do they destroy the sense?"

"No, the meaning is quite clear, but I am extremely particular about my Greek. I could not allow it to appear that I had written a document containing the slightest error. For instance, where you say, 'if you could only love me,' the verb 'love' should be in the present subjunctive instead of the aorist subjunctive, as the present conveys the idea of continued or repeated action, which is not true in this connection with the aorist. Now, you will admit that love is a mental state, and hence carries with it the idea of continuation. Do I make my meaning plain?"

"Plain as a meeting-house," replied Anderson, reaching out his hand, and gently detaching the paper from the fingers of the Doctor, who had now drifted into a state of scholastic exaltation. "We'll compromise on the aorist, Doc, but I'll make no further corrections, for we'd better get this thing out of sight. Now, how the devil will we get it to her? She'll probably be in here again, and I

might slip it into her hand, but that would be dangerous."

"Perhaps Meetso would take it," suggested the Doctor. "He always seems very pleasant and agreeable."

"Yes, that's a bright idea! You know more about the aorist subjunctive than you do about love matters. No; the only person that suggests herself to my mind at present is the old hag that cooks our goat stew. Old women take naturally to this sort of thing. It's generally pretty safe to ask an old woman to help you out in such a matter. It's the nature of the female sex to encourage a love affair. When they're beyond the age of taking star parts, they still hang around the stage of love's drama and play what useful rôles they can. You are always sure of their applause. Yes, my Romeo, the old woman shall be our nurse. Hark! What's that caterwauling?"

"Isn't that Meetso singing his serenade?" asked the Doctor. "The music doesn't sound very disagreeable to me."

They stepped to the door and looked out.

"Don't be afraid, Spiro," said Anderson,

not

as the surly old guard arose from a rock and advanced in a threatening manner.

"Don't be afraid; we merely want to see Meetso while he sings."

The young shepherd made a very romantic figure in the glorious moonlight. He was standing at a little distance from another stone hut, situated above his head on a shelving rock. Holding the guitar jauntily on his left arm, he thrummed it with rude skill, while he sang the following words:

LOVE'S FIRST KISS.

Long since I loved a charming girl, she was a shepherd's daughter.

Oh, love to me was very sad,
For I was but a tiny lad
Of ten when my heart sought her.

We sat among the flowers one day, in sweet idyllic fashion—

"Mary, my dear, I love you so!

"Mary," said I, "You ought to know
I'm dying of this passion!"

She hugged me close and kissed my lips—oh, first
and best of kisses!

"Fie! Fie!" she laughed, "You are too small,
You cannot comprehend at all
Love's torment or its blisses!"

When I grew big and sought her heart, 'twas lost to
me forever:

She has forgotten me ere this,
But I'll forget that honeyed kiss
Among the flowers—never!

“There are possibilities in that music,”
remarked Anderson. “The song would be
rather pretty if the beggar didn’t sing it
through his nose.”

CHAPTER IX

Anderson's conjectures regarding the effect produced by his friend's classic profile and romantic exterior on the heart of the brigand's daughter were correct, with the exception that they did not do justice to the violence of the storm which had been awakened in the poor girl's bosom.

It is often the case that maidens who are reared far from the guile and conventionality of society are more decided and ungovernable in their passions than their sisters who are surrounded from infancy by a hedge of propriety. Kyriakoula was a child of nature, who had imbibed enough of freedom and inspiration from looking at Mount Olympus all her life to feel that none of the rough shepherd youths of her acquaintance were suited to her. Neither was she attracted by her father's plan of marrying her, willy nilly, to some great man. She did not know exactly how to express the feeling to herself, but she

did feel that she was capable of a supreme passion, that she was willing to live or die for love, that, in fact, she couldn't live without it.

Dr. Brown was the first clean, handsome, blonde Anglo-Saxon that she had ever seen. In fact, in all her eighteen years she had never been farther away from her mountain village than to Larissa or Ellassona; and Dr. Brown, with his blue eyes, florid complexion and blonde curls seemed to her like an angel of light. Blonde men are always at a premium in a country of brunettes.

Who shall say into what sublime outlines the magic-lantern of maiden fancy had transformed Dr. Brown's long legs and classic features upon the screen of Kyriakoula's heart?

"Now, I'll tell you what to say," said Anderson to the Doctor. "When the old hag comes in the morning to make the coffee, I'll give her a song and dance about your desperate condition. When I ask, 'How is Kyr. Takis this morning?' and the old woman answers, you are to sigh loud and deep and ask after Kyriakoula. Then I'll talk to the old woman about the affair and give her the letter."

Melpoméne, Melpo for short, was the name of the creature referred to by Anderson in such unconventional terms. She was about sixty years of age, and so thin that she seemed all bone. The wrinkles in her faded face and the whiteness of her hair gave her an expression of extreme age, belied to a certain extent by the sprightliness of her movements and the erectness of her figure. The somberness of her attire showed that she had long ago relinquished even those little arts of attraction so often practiced by old ladies. Her hair hung down her neck in one lean, frizzled rat-tail. A black handkerchief encircled her brow. Her clothing consisted simply of jacket, chemise and skirt, similar in construction to those of Kyriakoula, but of coarse blue homespun. She wore a pair of black Turkish sandals, without stockings. Strange to say, this old woman was not at all talkative. The only communication that Anderson had been able to elicit from her up to the present time had consisted of an occasional brief "Yes" or "No," sounding more like grunts than human utterances.

The next morning, when Melpo presented herself, fortune, true to her reputation for

favoring the brave, smiled upon the Americans and their scheme. None of the brigands were in the hut at that early hour, the two nocturnal guards having arisen and gone out. The surly Spiro was acting as sentinel, and he performed his duties simply by watching the door from the outside, with his gun ready.

"Good morning, Kyria Melpoméne," said Anderson, cheerily, as the old woman shuffled into the hut, with a long-handled brass coffee-boiler in one hand and two small cups in the other. "Good morning, and a pleasant day to you. How's the chief this morning?"

A grunt.

"Now's your time, Brown—sigh!"

The Doctor obeyed and asked, like a schoolboy bounding New Jersey: "And Miss Kyriakoula, how is she?"

Wonder of wonders! Melpo did not grunt, but she raised her head and looked at the Doctor with unfeigned interest. Anderson observed that her eyes were large and beautiful, and, like the flint on an old, disused gun, still capable of striking fire, though there was no longer any powder in the pan.

"Signs are favorable, Doc. After about ten minutes, groan and repeat the question."

Anderson went to the fireplace, and getting down on his knees, helped the old woman scrape the embers together and blow them into a glow.

"You were once a very beautiful woman, Kyria Melpoméne," he whispered in her ear. "Your eyes are still perfectly glorious. Not even Kyriakoula has such eyes. You must have had many lovers and broken many hearts in your day."

This while Melpo blew the fire. When she paused to recover breath, Anderson puffed out his cheeks and attacked the fainting coals, thereby allowing his words to take effect and gaining time to prepare a new dose.

"Whew! whew!" began Melpo.

"A woman with such glorious eyes must be tender-hearted. I appeal to you for my poor friend, who is desperately in love and wants you to help him. He will be grateful, too, and will remember you when he gets back home. It can't be so long ago that you had lovers yourself. You are still as erect and beautifully formed as the youngest girl among them all. I shall be greatly surprised if you don't help my friend. Only sour, disappointed women are unable to sympathize with lovers.

But I'm letting you do all the blowing. Whew! Whew! Why the devil don't the old hag say something? Does she want me to pile it on thicker?"

"Whew! whew!" continued Melpo.

"You see, I have such strong hopes of you. All I ask is for you to take one little letter to Kyriakoula. The chief will never know. My friend's intentions are honorable. Besides, he would make a good match for Kyriakoula. He is of excellent family, and will be rich some day. You, a woman of forty-five, must still be interested in love matters!"

At this opportune moment the Doctor groaned. The old woman puckered her lips to blow, but, to Anderson's surprise, placed her hand upon her shriveled breast and sighed. Then she looked over her shoulder with great caution. Seeing no one on the watch, she placed one finger to her lips and whispered:

"Sh! the chief has ordered me not to talk with you. He would kill me if he knew. Give me the letter."

Anderson slipped the letter into her hand, and it immediately disappeared within the blue chemise. The coals were by this time

burning brightly, and the arch-conspirator arose, much pleased with the success of his operations so far.

"Groan once more before she leaves, Doc," he said. "Those groans of yours will have a great effect when they are reproduced for Kyriakoula's benefit. The old woman sympathizes with you."

"It's almost a pity to deceive her in this manner," replied the Doctor. "You find very much that is noble in the character of the Greek peasant."

"Wait till we see whether she betrays us or not, before you praise her too highly."

CHAPTER X

At eleven o'clock, when Melpo returned to cook the prisoners' dinner, it was evident from the significant glances which she cast first at one and then at the other, that she had a communication to make. That her own heart was deeply interested was apparent also from her occasional deep sighs and from the manner in which she rolled her eyes to the ceiling.

"You see, Doc," said Anderson, "that I was right. An old woman gets nearly as much fun out of helping on a love match as though she were in it herself. Seeing other people eat pie is for her the next best thing to eating it herself."

Melpo possessed indeed a letter concealed between her homespun blue chemise and her shriveled breast—a letter from the fair Kyriakoula directed to the Doctor. No opportunity presented itself for delivering the missive then, as Meetso came and stayed for nearly an hour, longing for a chance to talk of his

love for Kyriakoula. After the old woman ~~had left he~~ demanded very anxiously of the prisoners their opinion of his appearance in the moonlight and of the probable effects of the serenade.

"Did I not look beautiful," he inquired, "noble, romantic?"

"You did, indeed, my boy," replied Anderson. "I wished that I were a woman myself when I saw you, that I might fall in love with you."

After lunch the chief himself came in and chatted a while pleasantly, reassuring the prisoners of his devotion and his love for Americans in general. The old woman returned quite early in the afternoon and busied herself for a long time peeling potatoes and onions and preparing meat for the invariable stew.

Something in the way in which she repeatedly picked up and laid down one of the largest potatoes, without cutting it, attracted Anderson's attention.

Meetso was on guard at the door, chatting merrily. His newly acquired confidence had made him happy. Now and then he took a small bit of mirror from his pocket and con-

templated his features with a smile. At times half-savage urchins looked in, whispering to each other, or ran away hand in hand, giggling. Suddenly an idea struck Anderson. Going over to the old woman, he looked into the pot on the ground before her.

"Aren't you putting too many onions in here, Kyria Melpoméne?" he asked, bending over. "Meetso, for heaven's sake drive those brats away! Are we wild animals in a cage?"

Meetso turned, and cuffing one of the children sharply, ordered the others to "Get out!" Anderson quietly slipped the big potato into his pocket, and looking the old woman full in the eyes, raised his lids slightly by way of inquiry. She flashed back a look at him which said as plainly as a semaphore, "Yes." Anderson furtively crushed the potato in his pocket, and he felt instantly the sharp corners of a piece of writing paper in his palm. A moment later he took the letter boldly from his pocket and commenced to read it.

"What are you reading, Effendi?" asked Meetso, curiously.

"Only a few lines that my betrothed wrote me once. Sometimes I fear that I shall never

see her again. I know that you can sympathize with me. I read this fifty times a day."

Meetso sighed and looked away. Here is what Anderson read:

"My life, My light! How happy you have made me! I loved you from the first moment that my eyes fell upon your beautiful face! Oh, how glorious and grand you are, and how sad! But now be happy, my soul. I love you, and you me. What more do we need on earth? I dare write but a few lines. My father shall not touch a hair of your head nor of your friend's head either. I will kill my father before he shall touch you. You have come just in time to save me. My father wishes to give me to an old man whom I hate, but we will run away together. Oh, how happy I am! I am already forming my plans. Do what Melpo tells you. Fear nothing, but wait. From your adoring and ever faithful,

KYRIAKOULA.

"Read it to us aloud," said Meetso, "and tell us all about her."

"I can't," replied Anderson with a deep sigh. "This is too affecting to me. I guess I'll tear it up. It makes me too sad to have it around all the time. Besides," looking straight at the old woman, "I know it by heart."

With that he tore the letter into bits and placed them carefully on the fire. Melpo

gave him a look of comprehension and approval. She did not think Anderson's officiousness in his friend's love affair at all strange, because such matters are usually conducted in Greece by a third party.

"Was that letter grammatically written?" asked Brown in English. "Was it the work of an educated person? I should like very much to have seen it."

"Aha! So we're getting interested in the fair brigand! Stranger things have happened. Well, no; I shouldn't exactly say she was educated, though 'twas pretty good for a Greek girl. But you can teach her. Virgin soil, you know. Very interesting amusement."

"You fail to comprehend me," replied the Doctor, smiling benignly. "My interest was purely philological. Those mistakes that uneducated modern Greeks make in spelling are often very significant. I refer to the 'e' sound, and the various vowels and diphthongs which represent it. One can only spell correctly by knowing the derivation of the words, and the very mistakes which Greeks of to-day make are found on inscriptions of a comparatively early date. This proves conclusively that the pronunciation of the moderns was

applied, if not indeed to the classical tongue, at least to Greek of respectable antiquity. I repeat that I regret that you tore the letter up, for philological reasons."

"You do not care to hear the contents of the epistle then, I suppose?"

"Well, the gist of the matter, of course. What was the substance of the letter?"

"The substance of the letter, the kerne.—that is to say, the pith and essence of it—is that the young woman thinks you are a little tin god on wheels. She worships every molecule in your body. She calls you her life, her soul—"

"You don't happen to remember how she spelled the word 'soul,' do you? You see there are two 'e' sounds in it—"

"Oh, she spelled it all right. She will not let her pa even touch me, because I breathe the same air with you. She is now laying a plan to fly far, far away with you, to get married, and to raise a numerous brood of little brigands. I am to come along as a friend of the family."

"I see plainly that I am becoming involved here with a woman," said the Doctor. "I can consent to nothing of the kind."

"Don't you want to get back to your bronze pots and your pre-Adamic diaper-pins? If this girl wants to save us, that's her business, and I for one am mighty grateful to her. As for marrying her, you can see about that when you get back to Athens. Oh, one thing, Brown: Lesson No. 2 in the art of love-making. You're not to groan any more now, either before Kyriakoula or the old woman. You're to look radiant, to smile from ear to ear. Try it now. Good Lord, what a ghastly grin! However, that's better than nothing. That's your cue now."

CHAPTER XI

"Oh, is he not beautiful, my Melpo? How tall he is, and how romantic looking! And those great, sad eyes of his! He will understand what love is. Not something to make a noise over, to tell all the world, and then ask how much dowry a girl has. His great, sad eyes thrill me through and through. I believe I should faint if he touched me. They say to me, his eyes: 'I am longing for you more than I can endure. If I could put my arms around you once and then die, I should have joy enough for one lifetime.' Just think, my Melpo, he loves me, and I love him! He will be mine all my life. I am not to marry a dirty shepherd, nor an old man. I am to live with the hero of my dreams, my prince from a far country. Did you notice how fair his skin is, like new milk, and his beautiful golden curls, did you notice them? Oh, I wish I were you, Melpo, to go and cook for him and see him every day! But he will

soon be mine; I shall soon have him all to myself."

"Your father will never consent, child. His heart is set on your marrying old Poullos. Do you know why?"

"He thinks it would be a great thing to have a senator as son-in-law."

"More than that. I overheard him talking with old Poullos when he came up here to make his last campaign. Your father gave him many votes, and was promised protection. A free pardon, life in Athens, to be a senator himself—these are the things your father dreams of. He is very ambitious, and there is not a more clever man in Greece."

"Why is he a brigand then?" asked Kyriakoula, unbraiding her long hair. She was sitting on the side of the bed, preparatory to arising.

"Your mother used to tell me that you had never heard the story, but somebody must have told you before this."

"I have heard that he killed a man that wanted to marry mamma. But what is that? Many people have killed men, and it was not thought a great matter."

"That depends on how influential the man's relatives are. Basilios Coutlis was rich and

had many friends. So he was preferred to your father, who was poor. Your father met him one day, and said: 'Basili, if you do not renounce Irene publicly within a week, I'll kill you!' Coutlis laughed at him, but the day after the week was up he was found dead, shot through the heart. Not long after, when your mother was out walking with me one day, he told her he would kill her if she did not come with him. She went, partly because she was afraid of him and partly because she loved him. I went along to take care of her, and have been with him ever since. For years we were in terror, hurrying through the mountains at night and hiding in caverns by day. But now your father is rich and has many friends, and does not fear any more. He was dreadfully grieved when your mother died, and he swore that Coutlis's friends had killed her by chasing us about the mountains. He has killed several of them, and hopes by getting political influence to be revenged on the rest."

"To kill a man for love! I could do that!" cried Kyriakoula, shaking out her long hair that fell loose about her shoulders. Her eyes blazed with excitement.

"How happy my mother must have been!"

"Happy? On the contrary, the poor thing was very sad. She lived such a life of hardship."

"Is there no one living, then, but me who knows what love is? I could live with my beloved in perfect happiness, in the midst of disgrace, danger, poverty—anything. Only to have him with me and know that he loved me; that would be enough for me. What would I know about disgrace or hardship, when I had him in my arms like this? Oh, you will help me, won't you, Melpo? Good old Melpo!"

"Have I not helped you? It's enough to break one's heart to hear you go on. Have I not carried letters back and forth, at the risk of being killed? What more can you ask?"

"Everything more! Listen," said the girl, rising and coming close up to the old woman. "My father has gone to Ellassona and does not come back till to-morrow night. We will all run away together. You shall go with us and live with us forever in comfort."

Melpo shook her head.

"Your father would find us if we went

to the end of the earth, and would kill us all."

"Bah! You a mountain woman! You're an old coward, Melpo. I hate cowards. Look here, if you don't help me, and anything happens to my lover, I'll kill you with my own hands. I'll do it with this very dagger." Snatching from her bundle of clothing that lay upon a chair the beautifully ornamented dagger that she usually wore, she plucked the weapon from its silver sheath and advanced upon the terrified hag with the shining blade upraised. Her face looked out from among her disheveled hair like the face of a fury.

"Holy Virgin, save me!" shrieked Melpo, falling upon her knees. "She'll kill me, I know she will. Sweet Kyriakoula, don't kill old Melpo—I'll do anything you ask, indeed I will!"

The girl's anger passed away as quickly as it had blazed up.

"Of course you will, dear old Melpo!" she said, dropping the dagger to the floor from her upraised hand. "Have you not always been my companion and adviser? Whom else have I to go to, poor orphan, in all my troubles, but you? Come here, Melpo, let's

talk it over," and she sat down again upon the side of the bed. But Melpo moved near the door and stood watching her mistress suspiciously, like a dog that has lost confidence after a blow.

"Don't be afraid of your little Kyriakoula. I wouldn't hurt a hair of your head. What will I do if you desert me?" and covering her face with her hands, she began to sob violently. The old creature's fears were instantly disarmed. Rushing forward, she threw her arms about the girl's waist.

"There! there!" she pleaded, soothingly. "Don't cry, my Kyriakoula, don't cry! Old Melpo will never desert you, never! Never! I know how you feel myself."

"Listen, Melpo, we will leave this dreadful life and be honest, respectable. My lover is rich and strong, and he is an American. How often have you heard my father say that the Americans are all rich? My lover's people will protect us, and you shall always live with us, with your Kyriakoula."

"Yes! yes!" said the old woman eagerly, much pleased with the idea of getting away from the terrible Takis if the thing were indeed possible.

"Yes, my Melpo, and we will have a house and servants, and you shall be mistress and look after everything. I shall have no care save to love and worship my grand, noble husband. Oh, I shall be so happy! So happy! This very night we start. I have a friend who will let the two men go. You must take one more letter to my beloved, and be ready to leave with me to-night, never to come back again."

"Who is your friend?"

"I'll tell you when we get to Athens. I wish it were night! Come, my Melpo, come; fix my hair and bring my prettiest clothes and all my finery. I want to look very beautiful."

"Why, my eyes? There is no fête to-day."

"Ah! all the rest of my life will be a fête, and I shall always look my best before my lover. I shall pass by the door and let him see me."

"No matter what dress you wear, you will never look so beautiful as you do like this."

Kyriakoula had risen. One long, soft strand of hair had slipped over her shoulder in front, falling quite to her knee. The neck and bosom seemed the whiter because the cheeks were brown and the eyes, when she

was excited, black—the armament for a maddening surprise.

“Do you think he will like my hair?” asked Kyriakoula, winding a thick strand about her own neck. “If he doesn’t, I’ll choke him with it.”

CHAPTER XII

Kyriakoula did walk by the prison door, dressed in her holiday finery, as she had said she would do. But she had donned it, not so much for Dr. Brown's eye as for that of the susceptible Meetso, who was that morning performing sentinel duty; and she whispered a few words in his ear.

"When can you come away for a few moments, Meetso?"

"This noon, my heart, my—"

"Sh, Meetso, not here. I shall be down where the footpath joins the river-bed. I want to see you privately. Make no answer now."

She went away, leaving the poor fellow so dazed with wonder, joy, and expectation that he did not know whether his prisoners were in the hut or not. Promptly upon the appearance of his substitute, the young brigand hurried to the rendezvous. Sure enough, there was Kyriakoula, sitting upon a fallen pine.

She looked so beautiful that Meetso paused for a moment to gaze at her. Her red fez was fastened to her hair by a long silver dagger. Her tsaroukia, too, were red, and as she sat with feet crossed daintily. She waved to Meetso playfully with the tassel of her fez.

"Come here, Meetso! Why do you stand staring at me like that? One would think you had never seen me before!"

"You are so beautiful, my Kyriakoula, that I have no power to do anything but gaze at you. I could stand right here and look at you forever."

Kyriakoula laughed, a rippling, innocent laugh.

"You'd get hungry."

"Never! Neither hungry nor thirsty. I do not know anything when I see you except that you are near me. Oh, Kyriakoula!" he cried, running up to the girl, "why did you send for me? Was it to give me some hope? The Americans said that I was a very beautiful man, and that no woman could resist me. Do you not find me very beautiful, Kyriakoula? Only I, of all the pallikaria, am worthy of you. What a fine couple we would make!"

"Listen, Meetso. 'Tis for this very pur-



THE BRIGAND FELL ON HIS KNEES AND RAISED HIS CLASPED HANDS IN SUPPLICATION

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pose I asked you to come here. You have pretended now for two years that you love me."

"Pretended? Oh, Kyriakoula! My heart! my—"

"Listen, listen a moment. I do not believe that you love me at all."

"Kyriakoula, I swear that I love you more than life. I lie awake nights thinking of you. If I fall for a moment asleep, it is only to dream of you. I love you more than I do my little sister, more than—"

"Yes, yes, I know, Meetso. You talk very well, but are you willing to prove your love for me?"

The brigand fell on his knees and raised his clasped hands in supplication, as though praying to a goddess.

"Tell me what to do for you, and if man can do it you shall see it done. Have you an enemy that you want killed? Is there some great danger that I must undergo?"

"Poor Meetso!" said Kyriakoula, smiling. "You almost make me believe you. No; what you must do is quite easy. Listen! I love my father very much. He has always been kind to me. It's about these miserable

Americans. My father is sure to get into trouble through these men unless he lets them go immediately. If he hurts either of them, as he will certainly do if the ransom is not sent very soon, there will be no place on earth safe for him, neither in Greece nor in Turkey. Do you know about those Englishmen who were captured and killed several years ago? Troops were sent, and the poor klephts were nearly all shot. Those who were not shot down like wild pigs were captured and had their heads cut off. No influence could save them, because the English government wanted them killed. My father and you, Meetso, have fallen into just such a snare. America is a much richer and stronger country than England. So long as you were capturing Greeks or Turks I said nothing. Now I am afraid. I want you to help me set these men free."

Meetso rose to his feet. Despite his love, the Greek came to the surface.

"Women should not interfere in business matters, Kyriakoula," he said grandly. The girl's eyes snapped dangerously, but she smiled sadly and sighed.

"I see I was right," she said. "You do

not love me after all. I cannot make any arrangement with you."

"I don't quite understand you, Kyriakoula, but if you mean that you would give yourself to me, let me tell you it is quite useless. If I were to do as you say, your father would kill me instantly. I would not live two days to claim my reward."

"I've thought of all that. I want to make a bargain with you. You are, I'll admit, a very beautiful man, and I should be proud of such a husband. But the man I marry must be more than beautiful; he must do something to prove his love for me. Now this is your opportunity. When I thought of the danger my father was in I said, 'To whom shall I go?' and the only answer that came to me was, 'Why, to Meetso, of course, who says that he loves me. After all, where will I find a properer man, a nobler or braver?' "

"Oh, Kyriakoula! Did you think that about me?"

"Certainly I did. But you must not think me bold. It is only my great necessity that makes me confess such things," added the girl, looking down.

"Well, I'll do it, if you'll actually love me

and marry me. But how shall I deceive the other two watchmen and escape the vengeance of your father? He's a terrible man!"

"I'll tell you. Whom do you love best in the world?"

"What a question! You."

"After me, then?"

"My little sister Irene."

"Cross yourself then and say: 'I swear on the life of my little sister Irene not to betray Kyriakoula, and I promise to do what she asks of me.'"

"You'll marry me if I do?"

"I love you better than any other Greek living, and I'll marry you as soon as possible when we next meet."

Meetso swore, crossing himself with great solemnity.

"Now, Kyriakoula, my eyes, give me one kiss to bind the bargain."

But the girl sprang back of the log, and stood facing Meetso, her hand upon the hilt of her knife.

"What, you a Greek, and you'd take advantage of a girl in this way? Shame upon you! Would you marry a girl that you

could kiss before you were legally betrothed to her?"

"Forgive me, my Kyriakoula; I love you so much that I forgot."

"I forgive you this once, but don't you undertake such a thing again. Now listen. You are on guard again to-night? Very good. Mother Melpo is a wise woman, as you know, and understands herbs. She will brew a tea and will put a little, just a little, in the coffee of the other two guards. They will sleep for several hours very sound, as though they were drunk. When they begin snoring, you must look into the house and put your finger to your lips like this. Then the two Americans will come out and will tie your hands and feet with their handkerchiefs, and will lay you down beside the house. They will also tear off a piece of your fustanella and put it in your mouth and will tie a strap over your mouth, just for appearance sake. Then they will run away, and the devil go with them! As soon as they have gone I will have Melpo come out on the flat rock in front of my door for a glass of fresh water from the jug, and she will see you lying there in the moonlight. Then we will set up a great noise, and you

will be found gagged and bound. You can tell any story you like about the matter—"

"Bah! Even then your father would kill me! That is one of the rules of the band. Whoever allows a prisoner to escape is punished with death."

"Have you any money of your own?"

"Only a little. I had a great fortune, but I expended it all so as to look well in your eyes. I bought a new gun, very beautiful; two magnificent pistols and a saddle so covered with silver ornaments that it jingles like bells when I ride, a new embroidered vest, and many other things appropriate to a man of my personal appearance. I was going to surprise you, Kyriakoula, by appearing with all these things at once."

"Never mind, my Meetso. I shall see them another time. But here, you will see that I do care a little for you. Here are fifty Turkish pounds," and she handed him a small leather bag that jingled as it fell into his palm.

"This is part of my dowry."

"What is this, Kyriakoula? You're not offering me money?"

"Did I not tell you it is part of my dowry? And will it not be yours after a while, any way?

Take this and go to the seacoast, where you will find some caique going to one of the islands. In a week or so my father's wrath will pass away, and I will make him swear not to hurt you. Then you can write me where you are, and I will tell him I love you, and will try to make him agree to our marriage. If he does not consent—"

"Then you will come to me?" cried Meetso eagerly. Kyriakoula smiled tenderly at him and looked down. Then she sighed deeply and raised her eyes slowly.

"Perhaps you will no longer want me," she said.

"As if such a thing could be! Why, I would want you if I were dead! I—but that's my part of it."

"And now go home another way," said the girl. "We must not be seen coming out of the woods together. Good-by, my Meetso, till next we meet!"

"Good-by, my heart! my life! Good-by!"

CHAPTER XIII

"Here, Brown," said Anderson, "see if you can make this out. Moonlight is queer stuff. The letters look perfectly plain, yet I'll be dogged if I can read them."

The Doctor adjusted his glasses, and holding the small slip of paper first at arm's length and then close to his face, attempted to read.

"With time," he said, "I might be able to decipher it."

"Well, we're decidedly short on time about now. Sh—! did you hear anything? No? Perhaps I didn't, either. Come behind this rock and I'll scratch a match."

Stepping behind a huge boulder, the two young men bent over the paper together and read:

"Go straight down the hill to the river-bed. Follow the foothpath down the river till you come to a pine tree that lies across the stream with a plank nailed on top of it.

Cross here. Right before you will be two steep mountains. Follow the path that leads up between them."

"That's simple," said Anderson. "There's the river-bed. Let's depart with celerity. Ho, for the bronze pots!"

"Our course indeed seems plain," puffed the Doctor, exerting himself to the uttermost to keep pace with the sudden spurt which his nimbler and surer-footed companion was making down the steep hill. The path was full of treacherous, rolling rocks, and was at all times more suitable for goats and mountaineers than for a dignified Doctor of Philosophy and Authority on Argive bronzes. By moonlight it was doubly difficult. Anderson bounded on like a goat, never missing his footing. At last the Doctor actually fell, and his rifle flew jingling among the rocks.

"Holy Moses!" ejaculated Anderson. "If that bloody gun had gone off we should have had the whole town at our heels. Are you hurt? Good! Come on then."

And picking up the fallen gun, he dashed on toward the river, a rifle in each hand. Coming to the bank, the Americans found a

path leading down its perpendicular face, cut on the principle of a circular stair. Below lay the sandy bed. A tiny stream wound through the middle of it, and by its side their path was quite visible in the moonlight that fell brilliantly upon the white sand and silver thread of water.

Involuntarily they turned and took one last look at the wretched village. Though they had come at least a mile, the huts and the round sheep corral seemed but a few rods away. They could hear distinctly the occasional bleating of the lambs and the tinkling of bells in the clear mountain air. One of the houses, more pretentious than the rest, was whitewashed, and before it lay a large flat rock that served as a terrace.

"I'll bet your lady-love is straining her eyes to catch a last glimpse of you, old man," said Anderson. "A fine woman that, by the gods! If she'd been that mashed on me I might have filed her for future reference."

"I feel very grateful to her," replied the Doctor, carefully weighing his words, "and consider her a very fine type of modern Greek, approaching the classic models in perfection. I shall write to her in Greek and express my

gratitude. It was perhaps fortunate for us," he added with a smile, "that she did not know of my fixed determination never to become involved in any complications with the other sex."

Anderson set down one of the guns, threw a kiss at the white house; then he picked the gun up again and disappeared down the winding stair, humming softly:

"I bought a rooster for fifty cents;
Good-by, my lover, good-by!
And the son of a gun flew over the fence,
Good-by, my lover, good-by!"

The Doctor peered cautiously for a moment at the steps and followed. Once upon the level sand, they trotted along with great ease and rapidity. Any one meeting the two Americans would have mistaken them for brigands, they were so formidably armed. Each carried a short Gras rifle and a cartridge belt well filled; pistols and knives bristled in belts which had till now adorned the waists of the sleeping guards.

Once a loud barking of dogs caused them to pause for an instant in their flight and listen anxiously.

"It may be nothing," said Anderson. "A hundred other causes may have set the dogs

a-howling. It's lucky we made friends with the brutes. It's the intelligence for which these animals are so noted that saved us."

"I have also observed," replied the Doctor, "that the Greek dog raises his voice on very little pretext. At any rate, no other course is left open to us save to advance with all possible speed."

"Right you are; we'll parasang along like old Xenophon."

The directions were easily followed. When they reached the spot where a deep ravine cut into the nearest mountain range, there was the fallen pine with the plank nailed to its upper side, and a faint sheep trail could be seen leading off between the hills. The ascent was easy, although somewhat steep. They had not gone far before they observed in the distance a point where the ravine widened out and the path disappeared in a grove. Here was evidently one of those green spots that one so often sees darkening a light gray side of a Greek mountain, indicating the presence of one or more springs and of water near the surface.

"There'd be an excellent place for brigands," observed Anderson.

"I am not a man of war," replied the Doctor, "but whoever interferes with my peaceful progress through this country must take the consequences. We are not now unprepared to defend ourselves."

Hardly had he uttered these words when a fearful sound burst upon their ears, loud, nasal, fierce at first, and finally tapering away into silence in a series of spasmodic coughs.

The Americans sprang behind a rock and looked at each other in amazement.

"Was that a lion?" asked the Doctor. Anderson did not laugh. In their strange, wild surroundings, any delusion seemed natural.

"No," he replied gravely; "it's a donkey, which is worse, for somebody may be with it."

Brown, being the taller, straightened slowly up and peered over the top of the rock.

"There are two figures in the road," he said, instantly dodging down again, "and they look like women."

"Probably priests," said Anderson. "If so, they must go back with us. I don't propose to let them start all their brigand parishioners after us. Let me take a look. My eyes are better than yours." Long he gazed.

"It's two women," he declared at last, "and, by God! I believe it's the fair Kyriakoula and our old hag of the goat stews! They're laying for us to bid us an affectionate good-by."

"Quick!" whispered the Doctor, greatly agitated. "Let's go around some other way."

"Impossible, old man. 'Twould never do to leave the path."

"I don't know how to act."

"Do the high tragedy. Rush forward with your arms open. 'Oh, my darling! etc.' Come on now."

Anderson stepped briskly forward, followed by the embarrassed Doctor. The two figures, who had evidently been on the watch, came slowly down the path, and were soon so near that doubt as to their identity was no longer possible.

"Oh, here you are at last!" cried Melpo in her shrill voice. "Thank the Holy Virgin! You've been so long, and we were so afraid!"

"What luck this is!" said Anderson, "and how good of you to come! Doc, do your act or you'll wish we were back with the old man!"

Kyriakoula was standing at a little distance,

in the shadow, with head cast down. The Doctor gave a gulp and sprang forward, his arms widely extended. Some passage which he had once seen in a melodrama, in his early boyhood, before he had given up his life to the study of bronzes, flashed through his mind.

"Come to my arms, my darling!" he cried, hoarsely, in English.

Kyriakoula's two white hands flashed into view for an instant, and her long black cloak opened, as though she were about to take her lover to her bosom. She recovered herself with a little convulsive start, however, and said, casting down her eyes again, "It is not the custom for Greek girls to be embraced before they are legally betrothed."

"And quite right they are, too," said Anderson; "it would be better if our American girls were a little more particular about such things. Now, hadn't you lovers better say your good-bys as soon as possible? Brown and I must be pushing on. For your kindness, dear girl, I personally can never be sufficiently grateful." As Anderson said these words he held out his right hand, and his voice trembled with genuine emotion. But the old woman broke in volubly.

"There is no need of anybody saying good-by. We are going to Athens with you. We've got our donkeys tied here in the trees. We're never going back among the brigands any more. We are going straight to Kyriakoula's mother's brother, who has often offered her a home. But the brave gentleman must marry us—her I mean—as soon as possible, so that her father won't take us away and kill us."

Anderson's Greek was much more fluent than the Doctor's, so that he was able by talking loud and fast to drown out the latter's mild protest.

"Come on, then, Kyriakoula," he said. "I will help you to your horse. As best friend of your future husband I must show you all these little attentions, according to the American custom." He did not give the unfortunate Doctor opportunity to say a word, but tumbled the two women hurriedly upon the donkeys, and picking up a pine branch for a whip, started the animals briskly up the path.

"We've got to carry this thing out till we get among friends, old man. If you cross the girl in this matter, there'll be a wild

tigress loose. We'd better get out of the woods before you do it."

"Did you tie Meetso tight?" asked Kyriakoula, after half an hour of silence. "He might go up to my house and find I am gone."

"We wound him up like a mummy and stuffed his own fez down his throat," said Anderson cheerfully. "He won't move or peep till he's found in the morning."

"Poor Meetso!" said Kyriakoula, but she laughed merrily.

CHAPTER XIV

About ten days after the departure of Brown and Anderson for Olympus, the two great high priests of modern sensational journalism appeared in Athens—John Creamer and Winchester Lovell. What reader of the daily papers is unfamiliar with these names? Who has not seen them signed in triumphal capitals to blood-curdling telegrams from the most distant and inaccessible quarters of the globe? Nay, more, who does not know that one or both of these irrepressible and omniscient beings is always present at the exact moment when war is about to be declared, dynasties changed, or the political geography of the earth revised? These things the world knows. It will never learn of the timely words of warning or advice whispered into the ears of emperors and prime ministers, nor of how often the history of the human race has been changed by a hint. Modesty prevents the great high priests from divulging these things, and therefore we are kept in ignorance of the real powers behind

the throne, of the actual movers in domestic and foreign politics.

The news that two Americans of good social position had been captured by brigands, that a celebrated chief had visited the American Consul in person and had afterward written a threatening letter to that official, excited great interest in newspaper circles. Even the more conservative minds at the home offices saw an opportunity in the event. To John Creamer of the *Daily Daily* must be given the credit of first realizing the full possibilities in the brief paragraph which fell one day under his eye, as he was reading the European edition of his paper.

"The two Americans, Anderson and Brown, who were captured a week ago by brigands on Mount Olympus, have not yet been rescued. Relatives and friends are now greatly distressed, hearing that the young men may be in danger of mutilation or torture. Brown is a graduate of Harvard University and a Doctor of Philosophy. He belongs to one of the best New England families. Anderson is a nephew of the able but eccentric Senator Anderson of Michigan. The time given by Takis, the chief, for the raising of the ransom was one week, which expires to-day."

Mr. Creamer had no sooner read the paragraph than he dropped the paper upon his

knees and sat for a moment in study. His mind had scented sensationalism and was sniffing the air to see if the scent were true.

"Brigands, young Americans, Doctor of Philosophy—hum," he muttered, gazing up into a cloud of smoke created by a long whiff at his cigar. "Work up public interest a little from day to day, leading to grand horrible dénouement or exciting escape. Send in red-hot telegrams every day. Get public on nervous edge of excitement over suspended fate of Americans. Rumors of horrible mutilations one day, contradictions the next. Two Americans, hum; nephew of well-known Senator, hum! national matter. Mass-meetings in principal cities. Attack government for weak foreign policy. Get old Anderson to bring the matter up in the Senate. Paper use private influence to get man-of-war sent. Big bluff! The Daily Daily, the mouth-organ of American patriotism, the Cœur de Lion of American rights, circulation 700,000 daily! By God, it's a great thing! It's the biggest kind of a thing! Where's my hat?"

He shot from his chair as though hurled from it by a spring, seized his hat with his left hand, yanked the door open with his right,

and went down the stairs three steps at a time.

Mr. Creamer was in Rome. He had gone thither for the purpose of laying before His Holiness the Pope a scheme for transferring the papal seat from the Eternal City to Washington, D. C., U. S. A. He had prepared an eloquent plea on the subject, to be delivered in case he succeeded in obtaining an interview. It told of the many Catholics in America who regard His Holiness as their spiritual head; the indisputable fact that the New World would henceforth be the theater of progress and civilization, and that the Anglo-Saxon race would lead in the future as it had in the past; that if the Pope lived in the United States, nothing could prevent that country from becoming a Catholic state politically as it was fast becoming in actuality.

These and many more convincing arguments he was prepared to pour into the Holy Father's ear; these were not all. The Daily Daily was ready, in case the head of the Church would consent to take this important step, to erect a brand new St. Peter's in Washington, similar in style to the old, except that it would be absolutely modern from

top to bottom and fitted out with all modern improvements. The only condition imposed was that there should appear across the front, in letters of gold four feet high, the legend:

ERECTED FOR THE CATHOLIC WORLD BY
THE NEW YORK DAILY DAILY,
CIRCULATION, 3,000,000.

or 5,000,000, or whatever enormous figure this piece of unparalleled enterprise should run the circulation up to.

Mr. Creamer had solid authority for making this astounding proposition, for his paper was owned by a young man of inexhaustible wealth and shrewd enough to understand, withal, that any amount of bread cast upon the sea of advertising was sure to return again swelled a hundredfold.

At any rate, Mr. Creamer hoped to get a signed statement from His Holiness, thanking the Daily Daily for its offer, and giving his reasons for keeping the papal seat in Rome. In point of fact, Mr. Creamer's pockets were continually bulging with innumerable unsigned statements, covering all possible contingencies and suitable for any great dignitary or official to sign at a moment's notice. Among

these were at least half a dozen all ready for the Pope, and adapted to any frame of mind that the interviewed might chance to be in, or to any trend that the conversation might take.

The sensational journals desired a signed statement from the Pope more eagerly than from any other great dignitary, and they had been driven almost to desperation by the Holy Father's sweet but firm inaccessibility.

On reaching the telegraph office Mr. Creamer sent the following dispatch to his chief, in the private cipher arranged between them:

"DORST, DAILY DAILY, NEW YORK:

Pope nit now later maybe sly old fox Americans brigands big story off for Athens wire unlimited credit.
CREAMER."

Immediately on returning to his apartments Mr. Creamer began to pack with frantic haste. A train would be starting for Brindisi within the hour, and he meant to catch it. He emptied collars, cuffs, and shirts upon the bed, preparatory to storing them away in a large grip. He pulled out of the closet his field outfit, high boots, felt hat, blue officer's coat without the buttons, cavalry breeches. This outfit was the especial pride of his heart. He

hauled from the bottom of the same closet a magnificent saddle and a bridle adorned with showy silver rosettes.

"I shall probably buy a horse and ride right into the brigand country," he reflected. The packing was but the work of a few moments. He had done it so often that his skill in preparing for sudden departures was second only to his genius for smelling out sensations. In thirty minutes he had paid his bill and called a cab; in one hour and ten minutes he was seated comfortably in a compartment of an express train that was rolling out of Rome. That he had made no mistake from a business point of view was evident from the dispatch that awaited him at Brindisi. It read:

"CREAMER, BRINDISI, EN ROUTE ATHENS:

Good. On arrival interview King, Queen, Crown Prince and leading ministers. Also British and other foreign ministers. Get signed statements from King and Queen; also photograph and signed statement from brigand chief; credit wired. DORST."

About twenty minutes after Mr. Creamer's vacation of his room, his great rival and most dreaded competitor, Winchester Lovell of The New York Globe, sprang lightly up the stairs and knocked nervously at the door.

Each of these gentlemen had two main objects in life: The first was to do his own work; the second was to watch the other. There being no response, Mr. Lovell knocked again, louder than before.

"Signor Creamer allé, signor," said a slouchy-looking servant, appearing on the scene.

"Where?"

"Non so, signor."

"What cabman did he have, cocher, cochieri? savey?"

"Non so; non mi ricardo."

Lovell took a small gold piece from his pocket and looked at it reflectively.

"Who got cabman? Qui andato trovato cochieri,—savey?"

The man looked at the gold piece. It was something more than Creamer's final tip.

"Pour vous," said Lovell. "Je deseer même cocher. Volo medesimo cochieri. Questo oro per voi."

"Venite, signor," said the man, with a sublime wave of the hand, and Lovell followed him down the stairs. The coachman, who was just returning to his accustomed stand in front of the hotel, was easily found. This

man had been feed by Creamer to answer no questions. For another fee he informed Lovell that he had taken Creamer to the train for Brindisi.

Mr. Lovell accordingly rushed off to Brindisi by the next train, where, by a lucky chance, he succeeded in learning that his great rival had gone to Athens. Creamer was, in fact, an easy man to trace by reason of his personal appearance.

He was large and dark, and of splendid physique. Much of his success in his profession had been due to his handsome and distinguished exterior. When Creamer burst upon a community and proclaimed, "I represent the Daily Daily," Dorst felt proud to be so represented. The clothes of the great correspondent were always impressive; whether he appeared in field outfit or in a frock coat, a vast expanse of shirt front crinkled and gleamed on his Herculean chest. He had florid cheeks, parted his black hair in the middle, and wore a dainty goatee on his chin. The most distinguished looking man in any assemblage, he was an interesting, though inexhaustible and inundating talker—and, withal, a good fellow. Among the few pas-

sengers sailing from Brindisi to Patras it had been easy to describe so conspicuous a personage. Mr. Lovell immediately cabled his chief:

"PILLWIGGER, GLOBE, NEWYORK:

Creamer gone Athens no boat till day after tomorrow follow in special yacht hope overtake him wire unlimited credit. LOVELL."

Mr. Lovell did not overtake Mr. Creamer by sea, although he actually arrived at Patras before the regular train had started for Athens. What was his disgust to learn that Creamer had gone on to Athens in a special engine! That he also had not overestimated the enterprise of his journal was evident from the telegram which he found awaiting him at Patras:

"LOVELL, PATRAS:

Good. Keep eye on Creamer scoop him if possible. While there interview King Queen and entire royal family and get signed statements credit wired.

PILLWIGGER."

There was nothing for Mr. Lovell to do except to go on by the regular, which would bring him into Athens a few hours later than his rival. There being no one in Patras worth interviewing or getting a signed statement from, he walked briskly up and down in front

of the station, smoking strong, black cigars to quiet his nerves.

Mr. Winchester Lovell was a new light in journalism. His three distinguishing qualities were assurance, affability, and personal courage. Much younger than Creamer, he had gained renown by getting himself taken prisoner and condemned to death by a little South American republic, where he had joined the insurgents for the purpose of reporting a revolution. This had been a great stroke. The paper had actually been able to induce several Senators to make speeches on the subject, and had worked up such popular excitement throughout the country that mass-meetings were held at which fiery harangues were delivered. These same mass-meetings became the envy and despair even of Creamer and his journal. It was the memory of them which caused him to be so impressed with the brigand idea.

"Talk about mass-meetings!" he muttered, as he dashed on toward Athens seated in the cab of his private engine. "I'll work up a furor in America that'll run like a tidal wave from New York to San Francisco, and will spread from Canada to the Gulf!"

CHAPTER XV

The moment Mr. Creamer arrived in Athens, he jumped into a cab and drove to the American Consulate. The Honorable Burrows was in his office, and his eyes had no sooner rested upon the newcomer than he perceived that this was no ordinary visitor. Rising, he offered him a chair with great deference. Creamer removed his hat and placed it on the table. Then he picked up his chair, carried it around to the Consul's side of the table, and began to talk. If the Consul's eyes wandered inadvertently to the window or the door, Creamer reached out his left hand mechanically and pulled the listener's sleeve:

"I'm Mr. Creamer, John Creamer, you know—*the* John Creamer. You don't need any other introduction to me. You are, I suppose, the American Consul? Yes? I've been before the world for the last fifteen years, in connection with all the most sensational

affairs that have occurred in that time. The first venture I made in journalism threw the whole reading public of Europe, Asia, and Africa into convulsions of excitement. I had all civilization hanging by its chin to a live wire of sensationalism. You remember that first great piece of work of mine? No? Balloon. Professor Spinello Calvi, the great aëronaut, was then giving exhibitions in Madison Square Garden. He and a live monkey performed together on a trapeze in midair. I went to Binney, old Binney, the founder of the Trumpet. I said to him, 'Binney'—Mr. Binney, I mean: I was only a boy then—'Mr. Binney, I am prepared to work you up the greatest sensation of the age.' Old Binney looked at me like this, out of the corner of his eye. He was a shrewd man, Binney, the elder Binney, I mean, and he knew a genius when he saw one. That was the great secret of his success. 'Give me your idea,' he said, 'but be brief, for my time is precious.' I knew how to talk to him. I sized him up in a minute and I began:

" 'Balloon.'

" 'Nonsense!' says Binney. 'I'm busy.'

" 'Hold on a minute,' says I; 'this is new.'

"'You're going to the North Pole?' asks he.
'I laughed. 'Nothing of the kind. Spinello Calvi and I. Advertise our departure. Correspondence from heaven. I write up a couple of good articles before starting, which are to be published second and third days, dated "Midair," etc. You publish them, dropped, you know. See?' Binney smiled but said nothing. 'After that we're lost. Work up growing interest. Every day big scare-head, "Where are Creamer and Calvi?" If something sensational don't happen to us to cap climax it won't be my fault. Try it, Mr. Binney; it won't cost you much.'

"'I'll do it,' said Binney. 'Start to-morrow.'

"I sat up all that night writing my two articles. They were corkers. You ought to have seen old Binney when he read them. Next day we started, and something sensational did happen. We floated and floated night and day. I threw out letters, but they were never found. End of fourth day we were over great body of water, Lake Michigan. At night terrible storm broke out! Thunder burst around us, lightning flashed below us in great sheets of fire. We expected

every minute to be burned alive. We began to sink. Down! down! till we could hear waters seething."

Creamer here mechanically plucked the Consul by the sleeve, but the gesture was superfluous, as the latter was listening with pale face and open mouth.

"We threw out ballast and shot immediately to a terrific height, just escaping death, for a long sword of fire slashed a cloud in two just after we had passed through it. Immediately we began to sink again. After half an hour we heard the waters seething a second time, only two feet below us. A flash of lightning lit up the scene. Waves running mountain-high capped with foam. 'Here goes the monk, Professor,' says I. I turned to grab the poor animal which sat on the edge of the basket, whining and chattering with fear. No sooner were the words out of my mouth than he ran nimbly up the ropes and disappeared on top of the balloon, where he remained during the remainder of the voyage. This added a new terror to the situation, for we were afraid that the little devil would tear a hole in the silk with his claws. The monkey out of reach, I threw over the

cracker box, just in time. Again we shot up, and again we began to descend. The thunder was now rattling like a steady fire of cannon. I've been in such great danger only one other time in my life. I was with the Boers at the battle of Julia Hill. There were the English blazing away with machine guns. Here we were—the Boers and I, I mean. We were the best marksmen in the world. Every time an Englishman showed his head we either made him duck or put a bullet through it. Finally we charged—”

“Yes, yes,” interrupted the Consul, “but about the balloon?”

“Let me see; where was I?”

“You were sinking for the second time after attempting to throw the monkey over.”

“Oh—ah—yes, now I remember. I threw over the water jug instead.”

“The cracker box.”

“Yes, yes, the cracker box, of course. Lightning now burned steadily. Not flashed, but burned.”

“Above or below you?” asked the Consul.

“Ah, above. You see we were sinking. Had it been below we should have sunk into it. But it lit up the lake for miles and miles.

A sublime spectacle! I shall never forget it. But I had no time to enjoy it.

"‘Professor,’ I asked, ‘is there any way to make this thing rise again?’ He shrugged his shoulders. ‘Then, we must draw lots as to which shall jump over.’ ”

“Good Lord!” ejaculated the Consul.

“I tore off two little strips of paper and held them in my hand, so. ‘Short, jump; long, stay,’ says I. ‘Professor, draw!’ ”

“He drew the short, and sprang at my throat like a cat, knife in hand. Then ensued a terrific struggle. He was a strong man, and agile. I pitched him over at last, but he caught the side of the basket. Out of sheer deviltry he flung his knife at the balloon. Luckily the handle struck, and it dropped at my feet. I seized it and chopped off his fingers. As the balloon shot again into the air, I saw him plunging downward through the night, whirling over and over. I heard one long, piercing shriek—it was horrible! horrible!”

It was some moments before the Consul could speak. He was chained to his chair with inarticulate terror. At last he gasped, “And the aërial fire?”

"It died out just before I reached it." The Consul sank back with a sigh of relief.

"The interposition of Divine Providence!" he cried, the preacher coming for a moment to the surface. "You ought to thank God every day, sir, for your miraculous preservation."

"I do! I do! Well, the next time I descended it was in a wood near St. Joe, Michigan. I banged and smashed through trees, and was finally thrown out on the ground senseless. When I awoke, I found myself in the house of an old farmer, being nursed back to life by his beautiful daughter. Would you believe it, sir, the monkey had actually gone for help? He had found this girl, taken her by the dress, and led her to where I was."

"Animals sometimes show extraordinary intelligence," remarked the Consul. "Did you marry the daughter?"

Mr. Creamer cast a startled glance at the Consul. But no; the honorable gentleman was perfectly serious. In common with most preachers, he had a strongly sentimental side to his nature.

"No," replied Mr. Creamer, smiling. "In a romance I should certainly have done so;

but in real life things do not always turn out romantically. I wrote my story, however, and you may imagine that it made a fitting climax to the balloon expedition. I could not have done better had I depended on my imagination."

"I should think not!" exclaimed Mr. Burrows, with genuine conviction.

"You, of course, have read of my experience in Afghanistan where I had four horses shot under me in one afternoon, all exactly in the center of the forehead? Of course you have! But now about these brigands. Where are they?"

Mr. Burrows was yearning to learn about the four horses, but was ashamed to admit that he had not read about them. He mentally resolved to follow the newspapers more closely thereafter. "A man in a public position," he reflected, "must give more attention to profane, ephemeral literature than is expedient for a minister of the Gospel."

"The brigands, Mr. Streamer—"

"Creamer," said the high priest, severely.

"Creamer, I mean. Streamer was a mere *lapsus linguæ*," apologized the ex-preacher, actually bulldozed into telling a fib.

"Of course it was. When I find any one who doesn't know who John Creamer is I consider that I have struck a museum freak. Barnum, sir, could make a fortune out of such a man."

"No doubt, no doubt," replied the Consul, somewhat feebly. "The brigands are at present somewhere on Mount Olympus. To reach it you take a boat to Volo—"

"When?"

"To-night at seven."

Mr. Creamer looked at his watch. He had plenty of time, so he settled back comfortably in his chair and lit a big, black cigar.

"Don't smoke, eh, Mr. Consul? Injurious habit, very. Is Volo on Mount Olympus?"

"Oh, dear no! From Volo you take a train to Larissa, and from there you travel on foot or with mules."

"What's the matter with horses?"

"The ascent is so steep and the country so mountainous that horses would be of little use. The exact locality of the brigands is, of course, unknown."

"Oh, I'll find 'em. That's what I'm here for. But—" springing to his feet and taking out his watch, "I've forgotten something. I

must interview the royal family and principal ministers before I start. Where's the palace?"

"I regret to tell you that the entire royal family are in Denmark."

"Umph. Just let me come to that desk a moment. Or here, Consul, you write while I dictate. When I was in Copenhagen the Minister used to take all my dictations for me. He didn't have anything else to do, and it amused him. I usually have Ministers for amanuenses. It's tough to come down to a Consul."

Mr. Creamer laughed so merrily that the Consul could not be offended. He picked up the pen and waited the sentence with much curiosity. The high priest mounted his mental tripod. Putting both hands in his pockets, he walked up and down, chewing his cigar and rolling his eyes to the ceiling:

"George, King of Hellenes, Denmark," he dictated in a sonorous voice. As the Consul wrote, the mercury of respect for this great man rose several degrees in his mental thermometer. At this moment Creamer was positively sublime. Grasping his goatee in one hand, he extended the other in air as

though addressing a whole assemblage of kings.

"George, King of Hellenes, Denmark," he repeated, louder than before. "Got it?"

"Yes, sir," replied the Consul, meekly.

"Creamer sends greetings from great American people to Hellas' enlightened ruler. I am in position to state that American people do not hold Your Majesty personally responsible for existence of brigandage in Greece. What are Your Majesty's words of greeting to American people? Send them through me.

CREAMER."

"Isn't that a corker?" asked Mr. Creamer, exultingly. "You see how I work. I put myself in the position of a medium for the expression of the King's thoughts. His Majesty wants to say something, and I give him the chance to say it. He'll answer that. He can't help it. Now we'll dash off another. Are you ready?"

"I am," replied the Consul.

Again the high priest ascended the mental tripod and began:

"Western Union, London, repeat to Daily Daily, New York.

"Here I am in the Eternal City—no,

no! scratch that out. What does Socrates call Athens?"

"I don't remember whether it was Socrates or not," replied the Consul, "but we usually refer to Athens as the City of the Violet Crown."

"Yes, of course. Slipped my mind for a minute. It was Socrates, however. Now, let her go. Here I am in the City of the Violet Crown under the shadow of the old Acropolis.— A little classical flavor, you see, adds literary style. As I write, I behold in the distance the green slopes of— What's that mountain out there?"

"Hymettus; but its slopes are not green. They are usually spoken of as purple."

"Change it, then. That's an insignificant detail. The purple slopes of Mount Hymettus. So near am I that I can almost hear the millions of bees humming, and every breeze that comes in at the window is fraught with the fragrance of new-made honey."

The Consul sniffed judiciously. "I can't smell anything of the kind," he protested, feebly.

"I can, very plainly. You haven't the journalistic nose. Besides, local color is

needed. Write: In two hours I start for old Olympus and the rocky lairs of the blood-thirsty brigands. I have already notified the King of my arrival, and he is doubtless now on his way to Athens. But I cannot wait for him. Two of my countrymen are in the clutches of Takis, the most fiendish and implacable demon since the days of Nero. Quote: 'If the ransom demanded is not in my hands in one week,' he said in his letter to the American Consul, 'I will send these Americans back piecemeal.' End quote. Perhaps he is even now carrying out his hideous threat. Horrible! I am in a position to state, from inquiries made of citizens in all grades of society, that this monster is capable of any act of ferocity. Perhaps even now this Shylock of Olympus is slicing off his pound of human flesh. I fly to the rescue.

"CREAMER.

"There, how'll that do for a starter? Where's the telegraph office? Or, by the way, won't you let your man take these two dispatches over and file them? You'll find unlimited credit there. Just tell the director they're for Creamer. While I'm about it, I'd better make you my agent here. I'll be send-

ing on dispatches every day, anywhere from five hundred to two thousand words. Best plan will be to just send them to you, and you'll rush them on the wire the minute they come, any hour of the day or night. By the way, you'd better see the Director of Telegraphs and give him this," pulling a quantity of loose gold from his pocket and sliding it onto the table from the palm of his hand. "That'll oil up the machinery to begin with. Tell him if all my dispatches go through early, I'll give him as much more—"

"But, my dear sir—"

"Tut! tut! tut! It's not a bribe. Merely a little present from Creamer showing appreciation of services. And now I'm off. Good-by. See you when I get back. Oh, by the by, you'd better keep on the *qui vive* for a telegram from the King. If he sends anything, it must be got off immediately, day or night."

Before Mr. Burrows could realize the fact, the handsome, voluble, palpitating presence of Mr. John Creamer had disappeared.

CHAPTER XVI

The phase of life represented by the high priest was so new to the ex-preacher, so different from anything that he had ever imagined, that he sat for a moment stupefied, wondering if it were not all a dream. But no; there lay before him a pile of yellow sovereigns, and there still lingered in his mind the effects of that terrible story. Mr. Burrows thought of the sea of ærial fire and the Professor's wild scream as he plunged downward through the night, and shuddered.

Then it suddenly occurred to him that he had made himself responsible for telegrams that might arrive at any hour of the day or night. "I did not say that I would act as his agent," he reflected. "In fact, I can't do so. Yet he rushed off without allowing me to say a word. If he sends his telegrams to me, I can't keep 'em back."

Poor Mr. Burrows nearly went insane during the time that this responsibility rested

upon his shoulders. Creamer began the very next day to send in a series of blood-curdling dispatches, the first indications of a grand rhetorical climax of sensationalism. Some of those messages arrived at four in the morning, others at midnight. The Consul slept like a cat, with one eye open, not knowing at what unearthly moment the telegraph messenger's long, imperious ring might peal through the house.

As Mr. Creamer was opening the street door of the Consulate, he heard the flutter of a white muslin dress, and a nervous little hand was laid upon his arm. Turning, he beheld a wholesome, sweet American girl with honest blue eyes and a retroussé nose. Had he known her, he would have perceived that her cheeks had lost something of their freshness.

"Oh, Mr. Creamer," said Minnie, "I heard you say that you were going up among the brigands. I wasn't listening, but you were talking so loud. Will you take this little note for me?"

Mr. Creamer put the note in his pocket without glancing at the address, and replied:

"You do right to put your trust in John Creamer, my dear girl. Your note shall be



"THERE! THERE, DAD," SHE SAID

100

delivered and your confidence will not be betrayed."

"Thank you, oh, thank you!" murmured Minnie, blushing violently, her eyes filling with tears.

"There, there, there," said Mr. Creamer, patting the girl on the cheek. "Mr. Creamer will come back, and he will bring the bad boy back with him."

Minnie did not resent the familiarity, neither did she have cause to. Mr. Creamer stood on such a high pedestal of conscious superiority to the rest of the world that his feeling toward all womankind was a purely paternal one.

CHAPTER XVII

The high priest arrived safely in Volo, after passing two nights upon a little Greek steamer, and immediately took the morning train for Larissa. At eleven o'clock he and Paul found themselves located in an indescribably filthy room in an unspeakably filthy hotel.

Paul was an Athenian dragoman, who had consented to risk his life among the other brigands for the sum of two English pounds per day.

The high priest dined well. The food was excellent and the wine better. True, the plates had not been washed since they were last used, and the tablecloth had reached that stage when even its ashes would have been filthy, but these were mere details.

He had sent a second dispatch from Volo, and a third was now seething in his brain. He would be able to get it on the wires by one o'clock, and by two he would be off.

Paul had learned the route taken by the two Americans. He would follow that as far as possible, and then—why, then, he would draw on his genius. "The Daily Daily never gets left," he reflected.

No sooner planned than done. At two o'clock the great man, seated on a mountain donkey scarcely larger than himself, was trotting through the streets of Larissa, escorted by a rabble of wild and wondering brats, and followed by the faithful Paul, similarly mounted.

At three o'clock he met in the open road two of the very persons of whom he was in search, and two of whom he had never heard. Thus does fortune favor courage and genius.

"Here's somebody coming," he shouted to Paul.

"The two men are foreigners," said Paul, with that intense keenness of perception so remarkable in all Greeks.

"That's queer," mused Creamer. "Is it possible that fellow Lovell has got ahead of me again?"

So great was his anxiety on the matter that he leaped from the wretched little donkey and rushed up the road, puffing like an engine. A

few vigorous strides sufficed to remove his great fear, but a lesser one still remained.

"Maybe it's some other correspondents that have had the impertinence to go blundering about on my territory," he muttered. But, pshaw! as long as it isn't Lovell, I don't care. Lovell is the only man that could ever make John Creamer lose a wink of sleep. If it's anybody else, I'll scoop the ears off him yet. How-de-do, gentlemen; do you speak English?"

"We do," replied Anderson, "or rather we speak American. We're from God's country, we are."

"Put 'em there," cried Mr. Creamer, extending both his hands at once, one to each of the former captives. "I'm Creamer of The Daily Daily. You need no introduction to me. You've seen my name too often signed to all the most startling sensations of the day. Here's my card. You see, they call me not 'correspondent,' but 'commissioner.' 'Creamer, old boy,' said Dorst, just before I started for Europe this last time, 'we'll make a commissioner of you. You've outgrown the title of correspondent.' I just came from Rome. Been interviewing the

Pope. And now I'm bent on one of the strangest and most daring missions ever undertaken by a modern journalist. Two Americans are in the clutches of Takis, the king of brigands. He has threatened to mutilate them if a ransom is not paid within a given time. I am in a position to state that the ransom has not been paid, and the time is up. I am going to the brigand's den; perhaps I shall be an eye witness of the mutilation, and shall be able to wire the only account of such a scene ever printed in any language. I shall try to get a signed statement from the victims, describing their sensations, also photographs before and after mutilation. Excuse me, who are the ladies?"

In reply, Anderson burst into a shout of laughter so loud and of such great duration that he seemed threatened with hysteria. So infectious was his mirth that even Dr. Brown, who did not usually see the ridiculous side of things, smiled solemnly. Creamer looked on in amazement, suspecting for the moment that he had met a party of fugitives from a lunatic asylum. So evident was his perplexity that the sight of it at length assisted Anderson to control his mirth.

"Excuse us," he gasped. "You will, I know, when I explain to you that we are the two young men whom you hoped to see mutilated. We have escaped from the brigand's den. You were about to use some strong language, I believe, when my cachinations interrupted you. Don't let the presence of the ladies deter you, I pray. English is Chinese to them."

Mr. Creamer's face fell as though he had heard the worst of news. He could not conceal his disappointment over the escape of his fellow-countrymen.

"Why couldn't you have waited a day or two," he demanded at last, "until I could have got there and assisted in the escape?"

"Couldn't possibly do it. My friend Brown here is writing a great book on pre-Adamic diaper pins, and he had to get back before somebody else wrote it for him."

Mr. Creamer, as we have seen, although a talkative man, was also capable of quick thought and decisive action. Anderson seemed to him the leader of the party, so he took the architect by the arm and drew him to one side. Kyriakoula and Melpo looked on in silent amazement.

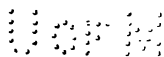
"It is some great American lord," whispered the former, "whom my lover's government or friends have sent to look for him."

"Why don't he talk to your lover, then?" asked Melpo. Kyriakoula cast a scornful glance at the old woman.

"Do you not know," she asked, "that one does not confer directly with so great a man as my lover is? See how noble and distinguished he looks, and how disdainful!"

"See here," said Creamer, "let's talk business. I represent twenty million dollars capital. Money is no object to me where the interests of the paper are concerned. The Daily Daily must have the news if it has to make 'em. Now look here," seizing Anderson by the sleeve, "I was sent out here to interview you fellows in the brigands' den, to witness the atrocities and finally to rescue you. That old beggar only wanted ten thousand dollars ransom. Why, damn it, man, the Daily Daily would have given twenty thousand dollars for the privilege of ransoming you!"

"I sympathize with you, my friend, really I do. But I'm too hungry to stand here and help you cry over spilled milk. In yonder



ancient town fat kine are slain and bleating lambs are butchered to make a roamer's holiday. Come back with us, fill your belly with red wine and beef, and the world will look brighter to you, even if Brown and I haven't lost our ears."

"No, but stop a minute. John Creamer never cries over spilled milk. Now, you're a young man of sense, of 'git up and git,' of daring. Tut! tut! Reading characters is my strong point. Come back with me to the brigand's den—"

"Not on your tintype!"

"Hear me out. I'll go up there with money enough to buy out the whole damn brigand outfit. I'll see this old curmudgeon, Takis, and I'll say to him: 'Tak, I'm Creamer of the Daily Daily. You know me and I know you. 'Nough said. This fellow Anderson is coming back, and you're to cut off one of his ears and be damned to you. Mind, you don't hurt him much. You send the ear on to relatives. Next day I'll arrive, pay your old ransom, and take prisoner away with me.'"

"Hm, yes! What do I get out of it?"

Mr. Creamer tightened his grasp on the young architect's arm, looked him impres-

sively in the face for a moment, and then whispered in his ear: "Another ten thousand dollars in cold cash, and a position on the Daily Daily as traveling correspondent. It'll be the making of you. Leave this picayune, three-cent student business, take a successful man's advice, and begin life in earnest. What's an ear to a chance like this?"

The high priest's enthusiasm and personal magnetism were almost overpowering. Anderson felt himself yielding, much as a bird must feel when it flutters about the serpent's glittering eyes. Mechanically his hands wandered to his ears, and he seized each of the protruding lobes with a convulsive grip. This saved him. Holding his ears as though he were in imminent danger of losing them, he ran across the road to his companions.

"Git up! Go lang!" he cried, punching one of the donkeys with his fist and launching a kick at the other. "Good-by, Creamer! I'm not in the ear business. Wouldn't do to begin. Supply wouldn't hold out."

The two little brutes started down the road, and in a moment the Daily Daily would have lost a most sensational story. It was saved this fate by Paul, who had been jabbering in

Greek with the two women, asking the most personal questions, according to the custom of the country.

"That brigand's daughter very fine woman, sir!" he remarked, riding up to his master. The latter stood with his hands in his pockets, looking into the middle of the road and thinking very hard, but to no purpose.

"What!" cried Mr. Creamer, so fiercely that Paul nearly fell off his donkey.

"That brigand's daughter very fine woman. She saved them, sir. She loved tall young man, Mr. Brown. Go to Athens now, marry all right. Very happy. Carry away brigand's guns and pistol and much—what you call him? Ammunition. Yes, sir. All right, sir."

In ten minutes Mr. Creamer had overtaken the retreating caravan.

"Hey!" he shouted; "hold on a minute!"

"No, you don't," cried Anderson. "Not if you raise it to twenty thousand dollars apiece."

"I've dropped that idea now. My dear fellow, why didn't you tell me that this lady was the brigand's daughter, and that your escape was due to her courage and finesse?" Removing his hat, he made a low bow to Kyriakoula.

"All lost, old man," said Anderson. "She doesn't understand a word."

"Hey, Paul! Paul! Hurry up here; I must interview this lady. Bring that camera. I'll have a life-size picture of her on the first page. I'll have a signed statement from her." He pulled his bundle of statements from his pocket and began to shuffle them through.

"But, pshaw! Of course, I've got none ready that'll do for a brigand's daughter. Nobody would think of preparing for an emergency like this. Sit down, Dr. Brown. Sit down, Mr. Anderson. All over in a minute. Paul, tell this young woman that the American people regard her as a great heroine, that they will be proud to see her married to an American gentleman."

"But I must protest," said Dr. Brown, nervously. "It is wrong to deceive this unfortunate female longer with the idea of matrimony. I am a man devoted to scientific pursuits, who cannot become thus entangled with a woman. I have kept silent till now that I might escape and get back to my work. There is really no need of allowing this deception to proceed further."

"Paul, tell her exactly what I said," com-

manded Creamer, mentally resolving, "This romance must come to a head. Great story. Daily Daily pronounces blessing and sends finest set of silverware that Tiffany can turn out. Full page illustration of set in a circle, with bride and groom in the center." The high priest was imperious and determined. He waved Brown aside, paying no attention whatever to his feeble protest, and went on with the interview. Kyriakoula was greatly flattered. Her blushes of mingled pleasure and modesty became her rarely.

"Paul, tell this charming lady American people want her photograph to hang up in their houses, so they can all see how beautiful she is."

"If Mr. Brauhon approves," replied Kyriakoula, sweetly.

"What she say, Paul?" asked Creamer. "Certainly Brown approves. No, no, my dear, don't get down. Tell her to sit just as she is, Paul. Now, all ready; look pleasant. Brown, just turn the donkey's head a little this way." The unsophisticated Doctor took a step forward and grasped the animal's halter. "Click!" went the instrument, and

Anderson slapped his leg, crying, "By Jove, that was clever!"

"Paul, keep on talking with the women about the escape. All about how it happened, you know. Excuse me one minute more, gentlemen, till I write a little statement for the young lady to sign." Mr. Creamer sat down on a rock, calmly wiped his brow, and taking out his note book began to write. Once during the throes of composition, he stretched his arms to full length, and smiling familiarly on the two Americans exclaimed, "Whew, it's hot!"

"Doc," whispered Anderson, "this is a new genus hominis. I suppose the woods are full of them, but this is the first one I ever struck."

"Will he be apt to detain us much longer?" asked the Doctor. "I feel that I ought to be pushing on. I feel also that he is involving me more deeply with this unfortunate female."

In the meantime, Kyriakoula, Melpo, and Paul were all jabbering at the tops of their voices.

"There!" cried Creamer, holding his note book at arm's length and gazing at the latest written page admiringly. "How'll this do?

Come over here, you fellows, and listen to this. We don't want to interrupt my interviewer."

"Come on, Doc, we're learning something. We'll hear his statement, and then we'll push on."

"Now," commanded the high priest, "listen and tell me if this isn't a corker: 'Kyriakoula Takis, Queen of Olympian Brigands, sends message through columns of Daily Daily to American women. American men are handsomest and noblest men on earth. Love and obey your husbands, and do not envy women of other nationalities. I have risked life and deserted father and country for American man.' Here, Paul, just get her to sign this. Tell her it says she thinks Dr. Brown is a very fine man."

"She not write, sir," said Paul, officiously. "Mostly few Greek women know write."

"She's got to write," declared the high priest. Going to Kyriakoula, he held the note-book before her face and made several invisible flourishes in the place where he desired her name to appear. "Scrivendo, scribere," he said, "voter nom, savey?"

Kyriakoula looked inquiringly at Dr. Brown

and smiled sweetly. "He wants you to write your name," explained the Doctor. "We must put a termination to this interview, already too extended, and be pushing on."

Kyriakoula instantly seized the stylographic pen, and wrote in beautiful Greek type,

Κυριακούλα Τάκης.

"Oh! we can't write, eh?" cried Mr. Creamer, dancing across the road in his glee. "Signed statement from the brigand queen to the American women! Whoop! That's no chestnut. Creamer, we're right in it!"

"Good-by, Mr. Creamer," said Dr. Brown, with more decision than his wont. "We must now be pushing on. Kyriakoula, Melpo, come!"

"Hold on!" shouted Creamer; "I want you to take my dispatch back with you. Write it in twenty minutes."

But his entreaties were unavailing. The little caravan paid no attention to his shouts, but trotted relentlessly down the road and out of sight.

"Paul, what'll I do? I can't let you leave me now. How'll I send back this dispatch?"

"Little village on ahead, sir. I find man. Promise him one English pound when he

returns with telegraph receipt. He go very fast, and come back very fast to get one pound quick. We go right on. For one pound he catch us—poh! No matter where. Yes, sir."

"Do you know where this brigand lives?"

"Yes, sir. Old woman tell me the road. Can't miss him. Also tell all about runaway. Have very full informations. Yes, sir. All right, sir."

The high priest sat down by the side of the road, drew a roll of telegraph blanks from his pocket, and wrote furiously for an hour. He described the finding of the little party on a giddy mountain road under the shadow of old Olympus. He told in moving terms of the love between the beautiful brigand queen and the distinguished American scholar, Dr. Brown of Harvard. He promised a photograph of the ravishing queen seated on her donkey, at the exact moment when the amorous Doctor was leading the animal over a narrow pass, skirting abyssmal depths. Then followed a description of the tying and gagging of the guard, which act was attributed to Kyriakoula herself: "She calls her brigand lover into the shadow of the gloomy prison. He opens his

arms to embrace her, when with a muffled thud, the butt of a heavy pistol falls upon his temple. Love gives her skill. She binds the senseless man with his own fustanella and stuffs his own tsaroukia down his throat. Thus does the brigand queen reward the lout whose very love is an insult to her."

A private dispatch was appended, directed to Dorst himself, recommending that the Daily Daily become sponsor to the brigand queen, and head a popular subscription among American women for the purchase of a fitting wedding present. Alas, poor Brown!

Paul's scheme for finding a messenger proved eminently practicable and the enterprising dragoman managed to pocket ten drachmas out of the pound for his own trouble.

CHAPTER XVIII

The reader may perhaps wonder why Mr. Creamer, after having unearthed so romantic a tale, should still wish to continue his journey. Such wonder is natural, for it would be difficult for the most gifted of everyday mortals to follow the workings of the great brain that throbbed in John Creamer's cranium. A Napoleon of journalists, his ambitions were never satisfied. True, he had seen the brigand's daughter, but the brigand still lurked in the obscurity of his den, undetected by the searchlight of modern journalism. An extraordinary story of love and adventure was even now humming over the wires, but where were the horrible atrocities?

'I'll do it!' soliloquized Mr. Creamer, as he jogged along over the route which had been so minutely and correctly described to Paul. "I'll do it! It won't hurt much. It'll soon be over, and it'll make every other journalist in the world turn green with envy.

Imprisonment in a South American cell and being stuffed with champagne and chicken tomares on the sly, will be considered cheap claptrap compared with this. I'll have some new cards printed with 'John Creamer, King of Journalists' on 'em and nobody'll ever crack a smile. I'll do it, by heaven!"

Having sworn this irrevocable oath he urged forward his animal with such untiring persistency that Paul's saddle became a genuine torture chair. And so it happened that they met in the road poor Meetso, with Kyriakoula's money in his pocket and much joy in his heart, hastening to the seacoast. Meetso had been found in the early morning and released, nearer dead than alive, but still happy. He gave his version of the affair with much spirit and great attention to detail. He had had plenty of time to think it out during the silent watches of the night. As for the other two guards, they were still soundly sleeping in the morning, thanks to Melpo's herb decoction. In fact, the old dame, in her zeal to render two possible pursuers *hors de combat*, had very nearly put them to sleep for good and all. Their condition was attributed by the simple villagers to witchcraft on

the part of the Americans, for the uneducated classes of Greece believe that all foreigners have more or less intimate relations with the Evil One.

The departure of Kyriakoula and the old woman was not in any way connected with the escape, for the girl always came and went without giving explanation to any one. Her father owned all the sheep in the village, and the shepherds were little else than his vassals. The illustrious Creamer had not been far wrong in describing her as a queen.

"Kyriakoula has hastened to her father," thought Meetso, "to plead with him for me. The dear girl loves me so that she has rushed right off, to make sure that he should hear of this first from her own lips. He will yield. He cannot help knowing that I am the most intelligent and beautiful young man in Thessaly. But his first rage? It was that which my Kyriakoula feared. In his first rage he may be blind with fury and listen to no one. Yes, I must do just as my Kyriakoula advised. I must go to one of the islands until she writes to me. I am too courageous. I must not let my courage get the better of my judgment." So he slipped away, and was jingling

Kyriakoula's money in his belt and singing softly a Romaic love song when Creamer and Paul met him at a turn in the mountain road, below Nezeró.

"Paul," said the wily Creamer, "who's this?"

"Nobody, sir. No, sir. Just common shepherd, sir."

"He's a handsome beggar. I'll get down and rest my legs, and you talk to him. He may know something about the brigands, fury of chief at escape or something of that kind."

Then lowering his voice:

"Don't tell him I'm Creamer. Might confuse and overwhelm the poor devil and he'd shut up like a clam."

"No, sir. Yes, sir. All right, sir."

Strange to say, the handsome shepherd himself began the conversation, turning first to Paul, as he recognized a foreigner in Creamer.

"Does the lordus speak Greek?" he asked.

"No."

"Is he a German or a Frenchman?"

"Neither. He's an American and fabulously wealthy."

"All Americans are wealthy. But how strange that is! I was told back yonder that

two other Americans had gone on ahead of me, on their way to Larissa. It rains Americans! Did you see anything of them?"

"Indeed we did," replied Paul. "The two American lords who were captured by brigands on Mount Olympus. They had escaped and were hurrying back to Athens. Did you hear anything of the affair?"

"Ah—something. But it's all lies. There are no brigands on Mount Olympus. These young men got up the story, no doubt, to cut a great figure. They will go back to their country and say, 'We were captured by brigands,' and people will point at them on the streets and say, 'There they go, the two famous young men.' All lies; all lies."

"But indeed it's no lie. The brigand's daughter Kyriakoula and an old woman, her servant, were with them."

"What!" shouted Meetso. "Was Kyriakoula with them?"

"You know her, then?"

"I—I know a certain Kyriakoula. Large girl, long hair in two braids, red cheeks, white teeth?"

"Same one, no doubt. Kyriakoula Takis. She rescued the young men. She fell in love

with one of them, and made a tool of her fool Greek lover. Hah! hah! hah! It was a clever thing. The poor fool let the Americans bind him for a ruse, and then they ran away. They are all going to Athens, where the young couple will be married immediately. The American lord is fabulously wealthy. All Americans are."

Trees and rocks began to chase past Meetso's eyes like the figures of a merry-go-round. His heart felt like a great live coal burning in his breast. He choked for breath and seized the limb of a tree.

"What's the matter?" asked Paul. "Are you sick?"

"I think—I—have—walked—too—fast," gasped Meetso, tearing at the collar of his shirt. "Yes, that's it! Oh, Christ and the Virgin! Adio, adio!" and he bounded down the road like a maniac, still tearing at his collar.

"Hey? What's this? What's this?" demanded Creamer.

"Very strange man, sir. When I tell him for Kyriakoula, go crazy immediately. You see him how he act."

Creamer watched the disappearing figure for several minutes.

"No good calling him back," he mused. "Might as well whistle to a dog with a tomato can tied to his tail. Besides, he might give some explanation of his strange conduct that would entirely spoil my story. Now, what'll that be? It's a brigand, of course. Is it the enraged father, chasing the eloping daughter? No, too young for him. Or is it the deceived brigand lover, bounding down the rocky defiles of old Olympus, brandishing his long yatagan and hissing hot vengeance? Aha! that's it. Paul, you must look out for another messenger."

"Yes, sir. Little village on side of lake. Not far, sir."

Thus did Creamer's judgment leap to the right conclusion, like the mousing owl upon its prey.

"If he should catch 'em and kill two or three of them, and I could get there, what a lucky stroke that would be! But he can't do it. I'll write a scorcher, leaving the reader in doubt as to their fate. I'll have the messenger inquire if anything happened. I must hurry on to see the high-monkey-monk brigand. My scheme with him is worth a dozen ordinary murders."

CHAPTER XIX

Meanwhile Meetso rushed on like a maddened animal. He had not stopped for an instant to form any plan or to collect his faculties. For a full mile he ran thus, driven by his passions as by pursuing furies and guided by blind unreasoning instinct. Kyriakoula was ahead of him. He would overtake her and bring her back.

Love and rage ran away with Meetso at first, but soon the voice of self-conceit began to be heard, and he stopped dead still in the middle of the road, struck motionless with the preposterousness of the idea that a woman should be so blind as to prefer any one else to himself.

"What!" he cried aloud; "that spindle-shanked, goggle-eyed, tow-headed stork to me, Meetso? Meetso, the strong, the beautiful, the sweet-voiced; musician, hero, beauty, all in one? Bah! The girl has been bewitched by Frankish black arts. Why, I

am a Christian, a civilized man, and he is a mere barbarian, a foreigner."

Meetso sat down on a rock, and taking his mirror from his pocket, looked at himself long and admiringly. Then he gave a snort of indignation.

"Anybody would believe that she had been bewitched," he said; "even her father. What a fool I would be to chase after her—I, Meetso Coulouriotes, and let those two barbarians laugh at me!"

Thus did conceit and the Greek's natural shrewdness turn him back from the pursuit and prevent one of those tragic scenes for which love is so often responsible. But let it not be thought that Meetso's love had died out; on the contrary, now that the beautiful Kyriakoula had run away from him, the desire for her seemed stronger than ever.

"Ah, those sweet lips!" he groaned. "Those lovely eyes, those red cheeks! Kyriakoula, little Kyriakoula, how could you treat poor Meetso so cruelly?"

Strange to say, the desire was mixed with the longing to be revenged on the girl herself for the insult offered his conceit by her blindness to his charms.

"Ah!" he groaned occasionally, grinding his teeth and pinching himself in impotent fury until the tears started to his eyes. "If I only had you here I'd pinch you like that, till you'd scream for mercy. You prefer a stork to me, do you? Take that and that! At last a really practical thought flashed through his confused brain, as lightning flashes through a cloudy sky.

"Her father is the only person who can bring her back, and he'll be glad to marry her to me now, after this scandal. But dare I go to the old man? Bah! Why not? Am I not a better man than he? I'll think of something to tell him. I'll tell him that I'm faithful when everybody else is false, and I'll offer to marry Kyriakoula for his sake. I'll have my knife ready at first," drawing a long blade from his belt, "and if the old devil makes the least suspicious move, I'll stick him like this," making a vicious lunge in the air, as though the terrible chief were even then before him.

"But he won't. He'll be glad to fall back on me, now that Stavro and Spiro have both run off and left him. And he'll be glad to marry off this daughter of his. His powerful friends in Athens will seize her and send her

back here immediately, and then, my lady, we'll teach you the difference between a Christian Greek and a barbarian. Oh, Kyriakoula! why did you treat me so?" The half insane brigand soon overtook Creamer and his guide, and scrambling over a rocky hill at one side of the path, left them behind.

Running nearly the whole distance, he arrived in half the usual time at the shepherds' mountain village, covered with dust, his clothing torn in many places, his face and hands bleeding from wounds inflicted by the thorns. It was after midnight when he arrived.

Distracted as he was, Meetso noticed at a glance that the usual bonfire around which the shepherds were in the habit of sitting till late in the night was not burning, and that all was silence and darkness in the village. The dogs that rushed snarling at him, however, and slunk silently out of sight as soon as they recognized him, showed that the place was not deserted. Not a soul looked out of a hut, no shepherd arose in his shaggy capote and called, "Who's there?"

While Meetso was debating in his mind as to whom he should awaken to learn whether the chief had yet returned, he saw the tall

figure of a man emerge from the corral and pass toward one of the huts, lighting his steps by means of a blazing pine torch. Advancing quickly, he recognized the head shepherd, Pavlos, carrying a sick lamb under his capote.

"Addio, Kyr' Pavle," he said, "has Kyr' Demetri yet returned?"

The sturdy shepherd nearly dropped the lamb in his astonishment.

"You!" he cried. "What brings you back here?"

"I want to see the chief."

"Well, you know your business better than I do. But you must be a brave man to seek the chief so soon after last night's business. Yes, he has come back, and knows all."

"What did he say?"

"Nothing. He turned very pale and trembled like a man with palsy. He went straight to his house and shut himself in. He hasn't come out since."

"Addio, Kyr' Pavle. Thanks. I am going to see him."

Before knocking on the chief's door, Meetso crossed himself three times devoutly, invoking the aid of both Christ and the Vir-

gin. He then still further fortified himself by laying his long, keen knife inside his embroidered vest, that he might draw it quickly and unexpectedly in case of need. After which he knocked on the door.

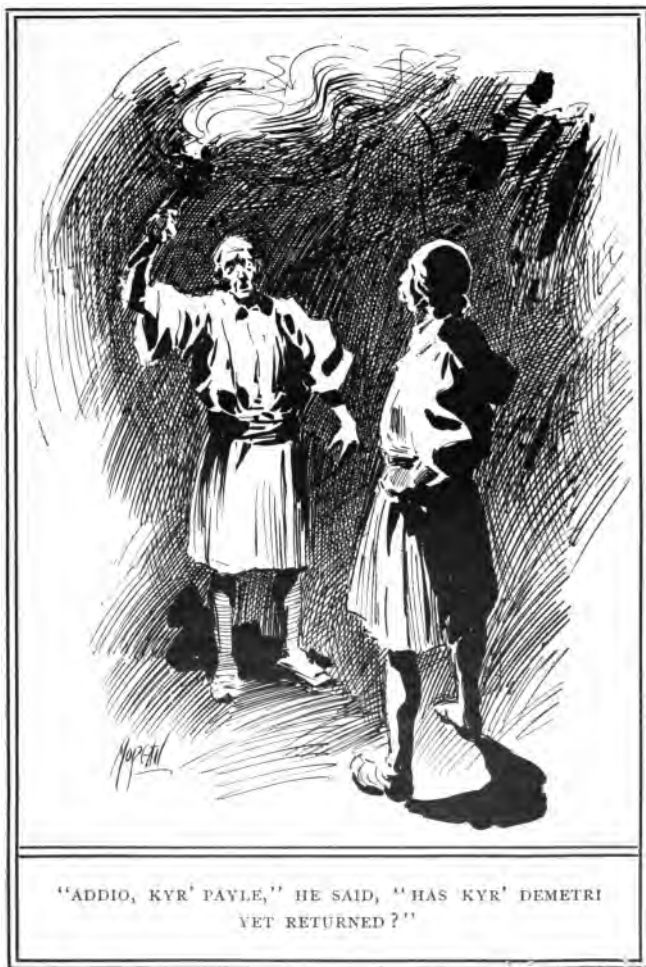
"Who's there?" cried a well-known voice from within. At the sound Meetso felt his knees knock together, and was seized with a sudden impulse to turn and flee.

"Who's there?" repeated the voice; "and what do you want?"

"'Tis I, Effendi—Meetso, your faithful follower. I have important news to tell you." There was the sound of the drawing of a bolt, a chain clanked, and the door was opened.

"Come in, dear Meetso," said the chief, in tones as sweet as a woman's. "I am delighted to see you back. I had feared that all the world had deserted me—my most faithful followers, and even my own daughter. Spiro and Stavro have run away, and even she has gone. Can you tell me anything of them?"

A candle was burning on the deal table, and by its light the chief looked pale and old. His dapper little figure was bent, and Meetso noticed that he still trembled.



"ADDIO, KYR' PAVLE," HE SAID, "HAS KYR' DEMETRI
YET RETURNED?"



"What a fool I was," thought the young man, "to be afraid of him! He's all broken up over his daughter. When I tell him the truth he'll jump at my proposition." He commenced to talk volubly and with great confidence.

"I was afraid to return, Effendi, because the prisoners escaped, and I thought you would hold me responsible. Stavro and Spiro will never come back, but I have heard something which you ought to know. I can now do you a kindness, and when I tell you what it is you will see how faithful I am. Down by Lake Nezeró I met two strangers, an American lordus and a Greek. They saw the prisoners outside of Larissa, and, Effendi, Kyriakoula was with them. I swear it on the life of my little sister. Na!" and he crossed himself and waited for some outburst of passion on the chief's part. The latter said nothing, and Meetso proceeded, a trifle disconcerted. This silence puzzled him. "It was she who set the two Americans free, Effendi. She planned the whole thing because she loved the tall one. She is going to Athens with them, and God knows what will become of her. They are not Christians and

civilized men like we are, Effendi. It is a terrible disgrace. Terrible!"

The chief took a step forward. He had straightened up now, and there was something in his eyes like that in a cat's when it is about to spring. Meetso did not think of the comparison, but he felt the danger. In the flickering candle light the terrible little Greek looked uncanny. A red wound on his bald head throbbed visibly, and the two little patches of hair, one on each temple, became horns. Meetso felt his arm creep up his side, instinctively starting for the knife in his vest. He dropped his arm as soon as he became conscious of the movement. The distance from his hand to the knife-handle seemed enormous. Moreover, he could not remember on which side of his vest he had put it. At last, making a superhuman effort, he found his voice, but it seemed to him that some one else was talking. If he could only get away from the chief's eyes for a moment he felt that he could talk better.

"It's a terrible disgrace, terrible! But I will save you from it. I will marry Kyriakoula, I swear to you that I will."

The chief smiled. Meetso had once

wounded a wolf that grinned like that, and he shuddered. But the chief's voice reassured him, it was so suave.

"Ah, my son," he said, "your devotion touches me. Till you came I thought I had not a friend in the world. And to think you would make this great sacrifice to save my honor! Let me embrace you."

The chief opened his arms, and Meetso rushed into them, only to reel back, his face twisting in mortal agony.

"Christ save! Ah!" he screamed shrilly, clutching for the knife hidden in his vest. He drew it forth, but it fell from his nerveless hand with a clang. He sank to the floor with the chief's dagger buried to the hilt in his back.

"So," said Takis, "you miserable cur! You thought to deceive me, did you? Do you see that?" pulling a crackling paper from his bosom. "My wretched daughter left that for me. She says you are a fool, a conceited fool. Do you hear, you animal?" There was no answer, not even a groan. Takis picked up the candle, and bending over, looked at his victim closely. Meetso had fallen on his side, with his head buried under one arm. The

chief took hold of the long hair and pulled the face into view. The eyes were open wide and stared whitely. When he let go the lock of hair, the head fell limply and the cheek struck "spat" in a pool of blood that was pouring from the mouth.

"Bah!" said the chief, "he's dead." Tearing a bit of black tape from his vest, he tied it about the knife handle, carefully knotting the ends in a double bow, and left the blade sticking in the wound. This was the sign, to any who might find the body, that a member of the band had been executed for treachery.



THE CHIEF OPENED HIS ARMS AND MEETSO RUSHED INTO THEM, ONLY TO REEL BACK,
HIS FACE TWISTING IN MORTAL AGONY

1941

CHAPTER XX

When Mr. Creamer arrived in the village on the following morning he found a peaceful shepherd community, with not a brigand within miles. He had come to find brigands, however, and following his never-fail policy, he settled upon the sturdy arch-shepherd Pavlos as the leader of the band. The latter's indignant denials produced no effect on the mind of the high priest.

"Tell him, Paul," he commanded, "that he can't disguise himself from me. That I've come up here to find brigands and to be captured by them, and that I don't propose to be done out of it."

Old Pavlos laughed uproariously at this, and leading his guest to the shade of a large tree, offered him an earthen bowl of fresh milk, some cheese and a chunk of brown bread.

"Tell the Effendi," he said to Paul, "that we are all peaceful and hard-working people here."

Creamer ate heartily of the bread and milk and found them delicious. Then he wrote the following dispatch:

"I am now in the very heart and center of the brigand country on the slopes of old Olympus. As I write these words, swarthy brigands, masquerading in the rough, hairy coats of goatherds and swineherds, lie around me among the rocks, casting murderous glances from under their shaggy eye-brows. Not far off stands the chief, a fierce giant, with the brawnystature of Hercules and the cruel, cunning face of Caliban. He is now arranging with my guide terms of our ransom. I came here to interview him, but the customs of civilized peoples are unknown to these wild barbarians. His rage over the escape of his prisoners is appalling to witness. He demands that I shall make good the loss of their ransom. I implore you to send enough money immediately to save me from possible mutilation. Whatever happens, I shall do my duty to my chosen profession and the Daily Daily.

CREAMER."

A young shepherd was sent off with this message. Then the high priest, his face lit up with that ecstasy which martyrs feel when going to immortality and the stake, pulled Uncle Pavlos down by his side in the shade and opened up his plan to him—the plan which was to make him the king of journalists.

He actually pleaded for an hour with the kindly old man to take him prisoner and to cut off one of his ears. The shepherd at first thought that his guest was joking. Later on, he changed his mind and concluded that he was a madman. Creamer passed the night in the cottage which had so lately served as the prison of his fellow-countrymen. In the morning he sent another dispatch:

"Brigands' Cave, Olympus. Chief, infuriated at escape of prisoners, will cut off one of my ears to-day and forward same by mail. If ransom is not paid within one week, will send on other. In God's name and name of humanity, telegraph money. He is now looking in at door of cave with long knife gleaming in right hand. I am in a position to state that in half an hour I shall have but one ear. CREAMER."

"If Dorst can't get up a sensation out of that," he reflected, "I don't know what he expects a man to do."

In the morning, when the high priest renewed his entreaties, Uncle Pavlos became alarmed.

"Here is some shrewd foreign detective," he thought, "trying to get me to fall into a trap. What a shame it would be if I, who have always been an honest man, were made

to suffer for the brigands." Accordingly, Mr. Creamer and Paul were bundled upon their donkeys and escorted back to Larissa.

"The old beggar recognized me," groaned Creamer, "and didn't dare touch a hair of my head. What a fool that I didn't go up there disguised!" And he telegraphed to his paper to that effect in a dispatch headed:

"Tremendous Influence and Far-reaching Power of the Daily Daily!"

CHAPTER XXI

Dr. Joseph Chandler Brown was at last restored to his little room in the National Museum and to his well-beloved bronze pots. Thanks to Michali's unforeseen skill and diligence, the precious fragments had taken no harm during the Doctor's enforced absence. Immediately on his return, he threw himself with such energy into his favorite pursuit that the memory of his sojourn among the brigands soon took on the unreal and distant hue of a nightmare when viewed by the after-light of day. In this nightmare the mountain prison, the grand outline of Olympus, Takis, Meetso, even the impulsive and vibrant Kyriakoula became dim and uncertain shapes within a day, almost within an hour. One would have thought, seeing the Doctor peering into one of the pots with his spectacled eyes, or daintily holding an antique fibula between his fingers while he attempted to decipher the decisive character in an inscrip-

tion, that his temporary absence had made not the slightest difference in the routine of his life.

This surmise would have been in a measure wrong. The Doctor had been putting off for nearly a year the composition of his great work on "Argive Bronzes," partly because of scholastic modesty,—that deep pleasure which all scholars take in affirming incapability,—and partly because of the mental hesitation and difficulty which surround all beginnings, especially that of a book.

On his return to Athens, he plunged boldly into the task, and within one week had actually written the first four pages of the first chapter. If his absorption and enthusiasm had been great before, now they became tremendous. From early morning until midnight and after he was sorting bronzes, examining references, making notes, reading treatises, writing. When he quoted authorities he was in mortal dread lest he had not quoted them all, and in support of the simplest statement he often raked the whole field of collateral literature with his untiring and petty scholarship.

He was sitting by his study lamp one even-

ing with several rusty mementoes of the ancient world before him, two or three books spread open, and a long, narrow box filled with cards arranged in alphabetical order, upon which he catalogued the names of authors and the pages to which he wished to refer. Dr. Brown was at that moment deeply interested in the subject of fibulæ, or safety pins, by a celebrated French author.

"What a remarkably important division of the subject this is!" he reflected. "And to what remote antiquity this little implement is traceable! If I went into this matter as deeply as I ought, I should write, not a separate chapter, but a whole book on fibulæ. By them alone one can often determine the source and influence of a civilization when other proofs fail. How I wish Bayley would bring out his book before I get much further on with mine!"

Bayley, a member of the British School, had become the greatest living authority on Acropolis bronzes, and the Doctor was awaiting with much impatience the birth of a work which Mr. Bayley was said to be even then composing. As he thus mused, the door-bell rang faintly below.

"I hope that isn't any one to see me," he grumbled. "I've no time to waste. I'll tell the servant I'm out."

He arose to put his resolve into execution, and had advanced halfway across the room when Anderson burst in upon him, carrying his card in his hand.

"Hello, old man!" he cried heartily. "You've got to be devilish exclusive of late, haven't you? The girl wanted to take up my card, but I told her no, I'd do it myself. Come out and get a glass of beer. You're becoming anæmic. I ought to have looked after you more carefully, but the fact is I've troubles of my own. Put on your hat."

"Thank you very much, Anderson, but you must excuse me. I have entered in earnest upon the compilation of my work, and from now on I am afraid you will see very little of me. I mean to avail myself of every moment."

"That's all very nice and Sunday-schooly, Doc, but the fact is I've got to see you. So get your hat. I'll sit here and whistle 'Tarah-ra Boom-de-ay' till you do."

The Doctor sighed, closed the French treatise, and did as he was bid, smiling sadly but benignantly. There was no getting

angry with Anderson. Besides, so far as was consistent with the study of archæology, he liked him. Friendship is a dignified sentiment, and one highly approved by the ancient authors. Cicero wrote an essay on it.

"You see," explained Anderson, as soon as the two were seated at a little round iron table in a beer garden, "I want to talk to you about Kyriakoula."

"Now, my dear Anderson," replied the Doctor, genuinely annoyed; "couldn't you find a more interesting topic of conversation? I came out with you because I am perhaps working a little too hard, and I thought your agreeable society would afford me a rest from serious thought. Women, you know, have never interested me, and after the narrow escape I had from that Amazonian female of the wilderness, I feel as though I never wished to see or hear of a woman again. I have work to do."

"What do you mean by a narrow escape?"

"She might have kept me cooped up there and guarded by half a dozen of her uncouth relatives until I married her."

"Would you have yielded?"

"I think I should. I know I should, in

fact. Rather than remain another week away from my bronzes, I would have yielded."

Anderson brought his hand down on the table so hard that one of the glasses jumped off. A waiter ran up officiously.

"Bring two beers!" cried the architect. "Excuse my enthusiasm, but what a fool the girl was!"

The Doctor looked at his friend with mingled curiosity and amazement.

"Fool? I thought, on the contrary, that she was a very bright woman for one in her station in life, and quite capable of taking care of herself."

"Right you are; but you see the girl means to marry you, and she should have grabbed you when she had the opportunity. A bird in the hand, you know. But she'll get you yet."

"Great heavens, Anderson! Your ghastly pleasantry, or unpleasantry, as I might perhaps more correctly designate it, actually disturbs me. What do you mean?"

"I mean that when a woman really gets after a man there is no way of escaping her."

"But why have you brought this subject up? I had nearly forgotten the woman's existence."

"Well, that's grateful of you, I must say, seeing that we owe liberty and perhaps life to her. I'll tell you. Her uncle, with whom she is stopping, has been to the American Consul. In America, the girl would have come to you with blood in her eye, but no Greek girl would do that. As you know, all matrimonial arrangements are made through relatives in this country. The uncle stretched a point in coming to the Consul, but he came, he said, to get Burrows to represent your relatives, as he realized that you have no one here."

"But I don't want to be represented—or here, you represent me. You know all the circumstances. You explain that I am not a marrying man. That, in fact, following your advice, I allowed the unfortunate young female to believe that—well, that, in fact, she was not altogether displeasing to me, in order that I might get back to my work."

"Hm," said Anderson. "Yes. But the fact is I think we are under some obligations to this girl. Besides, old man, she's a damned fine woman, and deserves something better than a kick."

"But this is preposterous. Now, really, you

got me into this. Besides, she evidently pleases you. Can't you marry her?"

"Look here, Brown. I tell you seriously and on my honor, if I stood in your boots I would. The girl don't want me. She wants you. I think we're bound in honor, as gentlemen—you to marry her, and I to advise you to do it."

"But—"

"Hold on a minute. The uncle thinks that you and Kyriakoula are dying for each other. He judges of your condition by hers. He says she neither eats nor sleeps, but just follows him about with her big eyes, as though mutely begging him to do something. So he went to the Consul. He thinks you haven't come to see her out of delicacy, and respects you greatly for it. You see, in Greek eyes the girl is already compromised. The uncle says you ought to marry her as soon as possible in order to protect her. If the mountain relatives send for her, they can take her back by force, and then old Takis would quietly stick a knife into her. That's done nearly every day here in Greece to dishonored women. It's thought a commendable act on the part of relatives—wiping out stain on the family honor with blood, you know. If anything

happens to this girl, you'll be her murderer, not I. I tell you plainly, I'm going to use all my influence to persuade you to marry the girl."

The Doctor raised his head so suddenly that his spectacles slipped half-way down upon his nose, but he forgot to put them in place. He gazed for a moment at his companion over the top of them, with his mouth open.

"I—I believe you're in earnest," he gasped at last.

"Never more in earnest in my life, old man."

"Then I must bid you good-night. It would be utterly useless for us to continue this discussion, and might possibly lead to a rupture of those amicable relations which, till now, have been extremely pleasant to me."

Saying which, the Doctor arose and went home, where he made a vain effort to finish the French treatise, but for the first time in his life he was unable to take any interest in his work. Neither, when he sought his couch, was he able to obtain any refreshing sleep.

CHAPTER XXII

Anderson called for another beer, lit a fresh cigar, and sat in the garden till far in the night. Minnie Burrows's conduct since his return had been most inexplicable. He had hoped that his danger among the brigands and his absence would lead her into some betrayal of feeling on first seeing him; but the meeting had not been at all pleasant and had resulted in an estrangement. She had treated him so coolly when he called upon her that he became awkward and silent.

"Aren't you glad to see me back?" he stammered.

"You and Dr. Brown seemed to have found plenty to interest you during your wanderings."

"Dr. Brown did; I didn't find anything to interest me."

"Oh! I suppose Kyriakoula wouldn't even look at you."

"What do I care about Kyriakoula? That was the Doctor's affair."

"How jealous you must be! It's a pity Brown is so much better looking than you."

Anderson left the house in a tiff. Though shrewd enough in giving advice to other people about their love matters, he was as stupid as anybody in his own. He could not see that Minnie was taunting him about Kyriakoula to hide some deeper spite.

The truth was that Minnie, being something of a coquette, had been in great trepidation over the tender missive she had sent by Creamer to Anderson, and had determined to treat the latter so maliciously that he would not dare to take any advantage of it. "I'll tell him I didn't write it," she thought. "No, that would be a fib; I'll tell him I've changed my mind. Of course, if he persists—"

But Anderson didn't persist, which made Minnie angrier than if he had taken all the advantage in the world of her letter, and the more she thought about his conduct the angrier she became.

"Maybe he thinks he's acting delicately in saying nothing about my letter," she pouted. "But I think he's a great big goose. I hate geese!"

The next time Anderson met Minnie in the

street she bowed stiffly and said, "How do you do, Mr. Anderson?" without stopping to exchange a word. The time after that she cut him dead, and though he called several times to see her, she was always out.

Minnie's spiteful allusions to Kyriakoula influenced Anderson to become a most violent advocate of Brown's early union with the fair brigand.

But it must not be thought that Minnie's unreasonable remarks to him formed the only reason for his taking up the cudgels in behalf of Kyriakoula. He called on the girl a few days after her settlement in Athens. He found her attired in European costume, a plain lawn dress, with her hair coiled into a huge knot at the back of her head. She was very quiet in her demeanor, and blushed vividly at sight of Anderson. The latter saw that the idea of his friend's indifference had not entered her head, and he could not resist the temptation of whispering, as he shook hands, "My friend Brown sends his love."

"Thanks!" she murmured, pressing his hand and flashing a glance at him so grateful, so bright from her glorious eyes that Anderson

swore to himself, "He shall marry her, damn him, or my name's Jenkins."

Kyriakoula thought that the negotiations were going on, and that Anderson had been sent by her lover solely to bring this message. If she had been a splendid creature in her mountain garb, she was charming in the more conventional costume.

"What better can he want?" thought Anderson, taking in at a glance the persuasive effect of great beauty combined with blushes and downcast eyes.

CHAPTER XXIII

But Anderson was not alone in espousing Kyriakoula's cause. The very next night after the conversation in the beer garden, telegrams began to pour in upon the Doctor and Kyriakoula. Creamer's sensation had been a wonderful success. He had excited the sensation lovers throughout the United States to such an extent over the fate of the young Americans that the rescue by Kyriakoula came upon them like the surprise in a well "worked-up" scene in a drama. They felt like applauding the heroine, and not finding any other way to give vent to their feelings, had resorted to the telegraph.

Kyriakoula was much mystified when she began to receive messages in English. Her uncle, of course, could not read them, and he took them over to the American Consul. Mr. Burrows translated to Mr. Mandopoulos, with much impressiveness, many such greetings as this:

"Kyriakoula Takis, Brave Daughter of Greece! We stretch our hands across the ocean to you. May your husband be worthy of you.

"EMANCIPATED DAUGHTERS OF PROGRESS,
"Wichita."

"But what does this mean?" asked Mr. Mandopoulos.

"It means, sir," replied the Consul, "that the brave women of America appreciate a heroic act in one of their own sex in a far-distant land, and are not afraid to tell her so."

"But where do they get the money to pay so much for telegrams? Do their husbands give it to them?"

"The women of America, sir, ask their husbands for nothing. They frequently dictate. In many places they vote, make laws, and hold office."

Mr. Mandopoulos crossed himself, but made no reply. He thought the honorable Consul was lying to him.

There were many other telegrams, notably from the Female Torchbearers of Freedom, of Cohoes, N. Y.; the Cripple Creek Vigilance Committee of Colorado, and the Laramie W. C. T. S. A., or Women's Christian Teetotaler Suffrage Association.

Several wealthy gentlemen of Texas and California sent Kyriakoula offers of marriage in case she changed her mind about Brown.

Dr. Brown himself, besides numerous messages from the above societies and others congratulating him on his acquisition of so wonderful a woman, received an offer of ten thousand dollars from a Chicago dime museum if he would allow the ceremony to be performed in the front window, and would exhibit himself and Kyriakoula for one month thereafter, two hours in the afternoon and two in the evening.

The romantic story and the desperate affection of the young couple were also described at length in the Athenian papers. On opening the *Asty* one morning, the most serious of the Athenian sheets, the Doctor was horrified to see his own picture side by side with that of Kyriakoula, accompanied by somewhat flowery and poetical but substantially correct biographies. If he attempted to walk from his rooms to the museum, fifty people seized him by the hand en route and effusively congratulated him, and Greeks whom he had never seen before, lifted their hats and smiled significantly.

He shut himself up in his rooms.

Anderson called several times, but the Doctor refused to be seen. Once he pounded on the door and shouted through, but the Authority on Bronzes kept as still as a mouse.

Brown tried to write, but could not collect his thoughts. Besides, he could not go on at all with his great work without making daily trips to his collection at the museum.

The Doctor at last found himself in a nervous condition bordering upon insanity. He walked his room for hours wringing his hands, and often actually tearing his hair.

"I will work," he would declare, "and dismiss all this nonsense from my head"; but he could not do it. "I'll go away from here. I'll go to Rome and finish my book there. But, then, what about my fragments? I can't take them out of the museum."

Frequently he stopped short in his nervous trips up and down the room, giving vent to a snort of indignation.

"To think that I should have been drawn into a woman complication of this kind—I of all men! And that the female actually seems to have some claim on me!"

For the Doctor could not help seeing that

he was under great obligations to Kyriakoula, and that her rescue of him had placed her in a position which would become very cruel if he repudiated her—a position which all this publicity made the more unavoidable.

CHAPTER XXIV

When, after a few days, the Consul's card was brought up, the Doctor felt that he could not refuse to receive him. That gentleman congratulated him with dignified, clerical facetiousness, holding out a long, bony hand as he said:

"So, Doctor, the brigand captured you, but you captured the brigand's daughter, eh? Sly dog! Sly dog!"

At that moment the Doctor believed that he hated the innocent old gentleman. The Consul's laugh sounded to him like the chuckle of a fiend. Brown was surprised to find, however, that he could not immediately burst out and deny any intention of marrying Kyriakoula.

"I'll set him right before he goes," he resolved, offering Mr. Burrows a chair.

"Uncle Sam is going to stand by you," said Mr. Burrows. "That is my mission here to-day. According to the customs of this coun-

try I am representing you, and I come to tell you that Uncle Sam, though generally busied with great affairs of state and the progress of civilization, occasionally unbends and interests himself in the antics of the playful god. I also represent Uncle Sam in this affair, and I wish to tell you what I have done. There is, as you know, great danger that the relatives may take your fair fiancée back to the mountains, where her life may be in danger. Right here Uncle Sam steps in, unofficially but effectually. There is at present an American man-of-war at Salonica. The missionary to whom she is attached does not need any protection, and I have often asked the captain to come here and make us a visit. But he has always replied: 'No; if you want a ship at Athens you must start an American missionary there, and the Foreign Missionary Society, which is a sort of annex to the Navy Department, will order one sent out.' The captain must have his little joke, you see, Doctor. Jolly old sea-dog!" and the Consul chuckled again. "But here I come in, you see, with a little diplomacy. I have written a full report of the case, with a description of the splendid heroism and beauty of your

fiancée, and have suggested to the captain that he come over here and coal up. He has replied to me—here's his letter now—thanking me for the suggestion. He's always cheated on coal in Turkish ports, and he has read accounts of your wonderful adventure, written by Mr. Creamer, in the New York papers that have just come to hand. Wonderful man, that Mr. Creamer! So to-morrow morning the Paul Jones will steam into port. I shall go down immediately. You will hear my salute, if you listen, about ten A.M. I receive seven guns—same rank as captain of a ship."

"But may I venture to inquire," asked the Doctor, much wondering, "what all this has to do with the fact that Miss—ah—Takis assisted Mr. Anderson and myself to escape from her wretched father?"

"Patience, patience, as the Greeks say. Here's where my little stroke of diplomacy comes in. Myself and wife and Miss Takis will call on the captain of the Paul Jones, and he will quietly run the young lady over to Salonica, where he will leave her with the family of the missionary, and you can be safely married. Isn't that a brilliant stroke of diplomacy?"

"Y—es," faltered the Doctor, with a sickly smile.

"And now I must be going. Uncle Sam, though he sometimes unbends, cannot waste too much time on foolish young lovers. I will bring the captain and perhaps some of the principal officers to see you to-morrow. Sly dog! Sly dog!"

And again chuckling horribly, he took his departure.

"Damned old ass!" hissed the Doctor, swearing for the first time in his life

CHAPTER XXV

"Will they marry me, willy nilly?" cried the Doctor, springing to his feet and kicking a footstool across the room. "Will they lead me to the sacrificial altar, like a victim to the slaughter? The whole world has combined against me. I must not let this thing go on. I must make some decided move, and make it now."

Putting on his hat, he ran downstairs, scrambled into a passing cab, and slammed the door to after him. Shortly afterward he stuck his head out of the window and shouted to the driver: "Go on, you brute! Why are you waiting here?"

"Your Excellency has given me no directions."

"You're a liar! Go to the American Institute, and be quick about it."

The driver whipped up his horses, muttering as he did so: "The excitement of gittin' married has turned his head. He'll be

crazier'n this after he's been in it a year or two." The poor fellow was himself united to a shrew. His excuse for the insult did not prevent his avenging it, however, by demanding a double fare, which Brown paid without a thought.

Dr. Williamson was seated in his study, engrossed in writing a paper attempting to prove that a deep hole near the ancient theater at Eretria was a pit for the reception of the bones of sacrificial victims. He maintained that it could not have been an underground passage, as claimed by the great Whörtlefinger, because firstly, it did not lead anywhere, and secondly, there was no place for it to lead to. The fact that it contained no traces of bones did not disturb the professor in the least. What was an insignificant fact when confronted by a magnificent theory?

"Ah, Dr. Brown!" he said, looking up with a smile as he recognized the features of his favorite pupil. "Come in. I am just preparing my paper for the next open meeting. There's a little point here I want to ask your advice about."

"Don't! don't! Dr. Williamson! Don't ask my advice about anything, I beg of you.

U of M



BROWN SAT DOWN AND LOOKED THE DIRECTOR FULL IN THE FACE

I am in such a nervous condition that I wouldn't know a Sheffield carving knife from a Mycenæan dagger."

The Director removed his spectacles, wiped them carefully, then replaced them, and scanned the features of his young confrère anxiously.

"Come here and sit down," he said, pulling a chair toward himself, "and tell me all about it."

Dr. Brown sat down and looked the Director full in the face. He could not begin for a moment; it seemed so preposterous that he, the rising Authority on Bronzes, should seek the advice of another scholar on a woman question. It was so unprofessional, so *infra dig*.

The Doctor put his hand on Brown's knee. "I feel something like a father to my boys," he said, smiling kindly, "even when they outstrip me in learning. Remember, I'm a much older man than you."

The words and the tone acted like magic. They brought the Authority on Bronzes across a stretch of three thousand years in the twinkling of an eye and transformed him into a young man seeking advice here and now.

"The truth of the matter is, Doctor," he began, nervously, "that I'm in very great trouble, and I want your advice. I, well I—"

"Speak out, my boy, speak out, whatever it is. I have been young myself. I will not betray your confidence, and will give you the best advice in my power."

"I'm in a scrape with a woman!"

The Director looked grave.

"The worst kind of a scrape, my young friend. The easiest to get into and the hardest to get out of without a smudge. Particularly unfortunate, too, for a student. Nothing steals time, distracts the mind, and upsets the judgment like a woman. It's very unfortunate, too, just on the eve of your marriage."

"My marriage?" gasped Brown.

"Yes. I have been much interested in your romantic story, and have been awaiting the first opportunity to congratulate you. I do congratulate you most heartily," and he seized Brown's limp, expressionless hand that trembled as with ague.

"We must clear this matter up and get you married as soon as possible. I always rejoice greatly when I hear that one of my pupils is about to marry, and the pleasure is much

deeper when that pupil bids fair, like yourself, to become a distinguished scholar. Matrimony," continued the Professor, still holding Brown's hand and assuming a didactic tone, "matrimony is the state most suitable for and most conducive to great scholarship. And the one who wishes to achieve distinction in the flowery fields of learning should marry early in life. *Ars longa est, vita brevis.* In the peaceful and quiet refuge of home we escape all the maddening frivolities and diverting excesses of youth, and are able to get high up the hill while others are only playing at the bottom. And what is so beautiful as a learned young man? What so delights the heart as to hear words of wisdom drop from the lips of one whose eyes are yet bright, upon whose cheeks yet bloom the Pierian roses of youth? What may we not expect of such a young man? What golden harvest may his age not bring forth? I have seen your fiancée," concluded the Professor, again dropping his voice into the kindly and paternal tone; "the Consul pointed her out to me the other evening in company with her uncle. She is a most attractive young lady, and it seems very appropriate to me that our best Authority on

ancient Greece (and in your department you are the best scholar that the Institute has produced so far) should marry a Greek. Socially, I may say on authority, that Mrs. Williamson is quite ready to receive your wife," and giving Brown's hand a warm punctuating squeeze, the good Director dropped it.

The Director's parting remark about social recognition was only advanced after one of those councils of war held in the family circle, at which Mrs. Williamson always presided, was chief orator, and held the controlling vote. This lady was easily the leader of the American colony in Athens—a stately woman of serene and placid dignity, and better than all, a favorite with the Queen.

Her ultimatum decided whether a newly arrived American was presentable to the inner circle of Athenian society or not. Though the daughter of a wealthy and fashionable New York family, her quick eye had detected the sterling qualities in Canute Williamson's character, even while that gentleman had been a poor, struggling student. A sound and distinguished scholar he was sure to become—she saw that. She perceived at a glance, also, that he had in him the making

of a good husband and father, and that he was, best of all, a thoroughly good fellow.

But, alas! Canute Williamson, A.B., had a penchant for negligé shirts and ready-made clothing. He was too absorbed in the optative mood to think much of external effect. Miss Chilton married him and began the reform. She held that a man might be perfect in the optative mood and wear unmentionables of the very latest cut. The transformation was slow but sure. Canute Williamson, Master of Arts, became also the master of a dress suit; Ph.D., he tied his own cravats; Ph.D., LL.D., he came down to dinner, even in the family circle, in a Tuxedo and a black necktie.

"Yes, Canute," Mrs. Williamson had said, in the council of war held to decide upon Kyriakoula's fate, "I think we may take this young woman up. As for her antecedents, her father is a brigand. But you see, we really have no precedent to go by in this case. If she were a haberdasher's or a retail grocer's daughter, we should be sure that people would not receive her. They couldn't, because there would be the danger of mixing classes. But here no such danger exists. Besides, she

is very beautiful and decidedly—what shall I say?—new, a sort of discovery. She might even make a furor, who knows? It isn't, either, as though her father were a common, ordinary brigand; anything that is common is, of course, vulgar. But he is distinguished in his profession. Why, they call him the Brigand King. This young woman is a Brigand Princess. There's a sort of glamour about royalty, even though it be only brigand royalty. Besides, Dr. Brown is well off and can dress her well. He will probably take a house, too, and will be able to return any social attentions."

The Director agreed. He always did when his wife advanced an opinion. He was, moreover, a matrimonial enthusiast; his own venture had been so successful.

Dr. Brown sat silent for a few moments, staring straight ahead of him. As his embarrassment increased his eyes wandered about the room, as a man's will when he is mentally seeking a word or an argument. Thus they fell upon his hat which he had dropped in a chair, and he arose mechanically.

"Thanks," he stuttered, "I—I—must be

going. I—I thank you so much, Dr. Williamson.” The good Director arose also.

“But you have not confided your little difficulty to me. Sometimes an older head, you know—?”

Dr. Brown stared at him vacantly.

“Oh—oh, yes!” he cried at last. “My little difficulty! I’ll come again, Doctor. Your kind words have so affected me at present—good day!”

The Director sat down at his desk and picked up the last written page of his treatise on the hole near the ancient Eretrian theater. But he laid the sheet down a moment afterward, and sat musing for a long time. Then, as the afternoon was warm and a big yellow wasp was humming in the window pane, he fell quietly asleep and dreamed of his own father, about to reprove him for a fault, but whose features gradually trembled into the sweet face of Miss Chilton in her wedding veil.

CHAPTER XXVI

Brown went straight to Anderson's room. The latter was out, probably on the Acropolis, his landlady said, as he went there every day. The surmise was correct, for there the Doctor found the architect, sitting on a fragment of marble and industriously drawing the capital of an Ionic column.

"Hello, old man!" cried Anderson. "Come up to have it out with Bayley? He's in the museum yonder, up to his neck in bronzes. He tells me his book will be out in a short time. You'd better get down to business. There won't be much left when he gets through. He'll cover your subject incidentally, just by way of illustration, you know, so thoroughly that you won't have a peg left to hang a sentence on."

"Anderson," said the Doctor in a pleading tone, "I have come to make one last appeal to you. You're about the only real friend I've had since I've lived in Athens. I must

get back to my work, as you say, but I can't do it until this woman business is settled. You alone know the circumstances, and that I had no intention of involving myself seriously. To run away would be cowardly. What shall I do?"

"Marry the girl," replied Anderson, decisively. "You are involved deeper than we intended, of course, but the fact remains that you are involved, even to the extent of your honor. Marry the girl and settle down to work in earnest. She's a magnificent woman; she dotes on you. You're a Philhellene, she a Greek—"

"She is of a pure classic type," mused the Doctor.

"There you are! Look at it in that light. You will take a very fine sample of Greece with you wherever you go. Marry her Sunday and settle down to work on Monday."

"I don't suppose my being married would prevent my working," observed the Doctor, "but it's so foreign to all my plans. Besides, what would my dear old aunt say? Perhaps I shall yet find some honorable means of escape. Why, it's ridiculous," he exclaimed, returning to the charge, "to ask me to marry

a woman whom I scarcely know. What do I know of her character?"

"This!" cried Anderson, with enthusiasm; "that she's as pure and innocent as one of the springs on her native mountain. She knows nothing of the deceit and vice of artificial society. Why, man, you don't know what luck you're in. You go into the wilderness and pick up a nugget of pure gold and try to throw it away. Good Lord, man, slap her into an evening dress, and she'll be a goddess!"

"But I don't care about society, you know."

"You don't have to. But it helps a man along to have a wife that he can be proud of. Suppose you marry some old crow. People point at her and ask, 'Who is that death's head yonder?' 'Oh, that's Brown's wife. He's a musty old antiquarian.' On the other hand, you marry a splendid creature like this. People ask: 'Who's the Venus di Milo yonder? Gad, she's a stunner?' and somebody's sure to reply: 'That? Why, that's the wife of the celebrated Dr. Brown, the great Authority on some terribly abstruse subject or other. Appropriate, isn't it, that learning and beauty should go together?'"

CHAPTER XXVII

That evening the postman brought two letters to Dr. Brown. One bore a Turkish postmark, and was in the fine, elegant manuscript of Takis. That he did not wish to be forgotten was evident from the contents of the epistle:

"DR. BROWN, WORTHY SIR: My unfortunate friend Meetso, now deceased, informed me almost with his last breath that my daughter Kyriakoula is responsible for your sudden departure from Mount Olympus. I also learn that she went with you. It is the custom in Greece, when a young woman's reputation is ruined, for her relatives to avenge her. I suppose of course that you intend to marry my daughter. I write to request that the ceremony be performed within two weeks. Although at one time I had other plans for her future, I now consider this the only course left open to her. I will avenge the insult to my honor when and where you least expect it, unless you comply with my request. TAKIS."

"Ugh," said the Doctor. "What a vindictive old devil he is! And how high-handed,

too. But I'm not afraid of him. Still, a man couldn't do any careful thinking if he were living in momentary expectation that a bullet would come crashing through the window, or that a brigand were crouching under the bed with a knife between his teeth!"

He knew without opening the next letter whom it was from. The envelope bore the somewhat cramped, old-fashioned characters of his benefactress, and the postmark "East Haddam" was perfectly visible. He hesitated a moment before opening it.

"She's read those ridiculous telegrams," he thought, "and she feels disgraced. To think that I should have brought into such notoriety one of the oldest and most respectable families of Massachusetts! She would dislike the idea of my marrying, anyway. Her sole interest in me is connected with my intellectual attainments. And when it comes to a brigand's daughter—and such a vindictive old brigand, too!"

Dr. Brown arose, kneeled down upon his hands and knees, and looked under the bed. Then he opened the wardrobe door and peeped cautiously within, poking among the coats and trousers' legs with his hands.

"Let me see," he mused. "What am I looking for? I declare I'm getting so absent-minded over this wretched business, it's a wonder I have any brains left at all! Oh, yes! I must read my aunt's letter."

The Doctor's surprise at its contents proved more plainly than anything else could have done how totally ignorant he was of women and their ways. The dear lady, like most old maids, had an extremely romantic and sentimental heart.

"Since making you my heir," she wrote, "I have come to regard you as a son. Knowing your studious habits, I have despaired of your ever marrying, but I will confess to you that this has become the great hope of my life. Everybody should marry, Joseph. No one should live alone, without family and children to love and care for them in old age. This beautiful Greek girl seems to have been sent by Providence as an answer to my prayers. I have seen her picture in the New York Daily Daily. She has a very sweet and beautiful face. I do not wonder that you love her. I am sure I shall do the same. A woman with such a sweet expression cannot fail to make you a good wife, Joseph," etc., etc.

Dr. Brown rested his face in his hands and sat for a long time thinking. Had his thoughts taken a practical turn he might have wondered how the Daily Daily could print Kyriakoula's picture in time for his aunt to see it and get a letter back to Athens. This never occurred to him, however. He was running over the list of all the great Authorities whom he knew or had heard of, and was trying to remember how many of them were married. Now, as every one knows, the majority of great Authorities on abstruse subjects are Germans, and the Germans are a philo-progenitive race. The more Brown hunted for precedent the more he became convinced that great scholarship and matrimony go hand in hand.

For the benefit of the curious, it may be well to state the means by which Kyriakoula's picture was produced in New York. Mr. Creamer, the distinguished inventor of a method for sending photographs by telegraph, had wired the following, "Kyriakoula, dark, Oriental type, fez, very beautiful." This was sent down to the artist, a young man of ability, but not very well posted on Oriental types and Greek costumes. In his despair

he bethought him of an engraving of Lalla Rookh in an old edition of Tom Moore. That was certainly Oriental and very beautiful. Adorned with a fez, and neatly dove-tailed to the body of an Albanian woman found in an ethnological chart, it contributed to a *tout ensemble* that would have charmed a less sentimental heart than that of dear old Aunt Sally Brown.

CHAPTER XXVIII

John Creamer himself, Creamer the Great, the irrepressible, reappeared in Athens at this juncture. He had taken a flying trip to Turkey in the hopes of witnessing a massacre of Armenians. Fate had smiled upon him in its usual obliging manner, and several thousand helpless Christians had been slaughtered like sheep at Easter time for the sole object, so far as Mr. Creamer was concerned, that the American people might read a graphic description of a modern St. Bartholomew, penned by the commissioner of the Daily Daily, circulation 750,000.

It took Mr. Creamer but five minutes after reaching his hotel to change from his traveling attire to his extravagantly long Prince Albert, his high hat, his gloves, and his patent-leather shoes. At the end of the sixth minute he was reposing magnificently in one corner of a victoria, and had started upon a round of calls. Of course, he drove first to the palace,

where he left his card for His Majesty as an opening wedglet of courtesy, introduced with a view to a possible signed statement. The Consul was not at home, and Mrs. Williamson was indisposed. From the Institute Mr. Creamer drove directly to the lodgings of Dr. Brown.

"I congratulate you!" he cried, bursting into the room. "In the name of the great American people, and as European Commissioner of the Daily Daily, circulation 750,000, I congratulate you."

"I do not exactly take your meaning," said the Authority, rising slowly. "If you refer to my great work, I fear that I am not a fit subject for congratulation upon that score. It is not progressing so rapidly as I could have wished. I have had many distractions of late."

"Your work, my dear fellow? Nonsense! The great American public does not bother its head about such matters. I refer to your escape from the mountains and your approaching union with the brigand princess. When is the happy event to come off?"

Mr. Creamer seated himself in the most comfortable chair in the room and lit a huge

cigar. Thrusting his thumbs into his arm-pits, he blew out a dense cumulus of fragrant smoke. "I—ah—no definite day has been fixed," replied the Doctor, dropping into the seat by his table, and wistfully fumbling his manuscript.

"Good!" shouted Mr. Creamer. "Good! We'll rush the thing right through, so that I can be at the wedding and say, 'God bless you, my children,' on behalf of the Daily Daily. A dispatch describing the ceremony will make a fitting closing chapter to our little romance. I'll write a few lines to-day on the subject. By the way, I met your prospective father-in-law on the boat coming from Smyrna. He was on his way to Athens."

Brown gave a sudden start and turned pale.

"Eh?" he ejaculated, forgetting for a moment the great work.

"Yes. Smoke?" and Mr. Creamer laid a handful of cigars on the table. "No? Injurious habit, very. Why, yes; I was telling the story of our adventures to a party of gentlemen on board, and it seems the brigand chief was within hearing. That night he came into my cabin, told me who he was, and asked

if I was likely to see you within the next few days. When I told him 'yes,' he asked me to say to you that the time was nearly up, and that he was now on his way to keep his appointment with you. He's a nasty-looking customer—teeth like a wolf's. Well, I must be going. So long, old man."

"Ah, Mr. Creamer!" called Brown, springing to the door. The Commissioner, half-way down the dark stairs, turned and looked back. "Might I ask you not to put anything more in the papers about my affairs? It—ah—doesn't seem necessary to me. They surely cannot interest the public farther."

"Not put anything in the paper!" gasped Mr. Creamer. "What do you suppose I am here for? As for your affairs not being interesting, John Creamer invests everything that he writes with a glamour of interest. Do you know," he continued, as the monstrosity of the Doctor's request assumed its full proportions in his mind, "that you are trying to interfere with the progress of civilization? Private affairs? There is no such thing. The electric search-light of the Daily Daily makes all affairs public. Why, man! You might as

well attempt to interfere with the onward rush of the sun in his orbit as to ask John Creamer not to print the news."

The Doctor closed the door with a sigh.

"I suppose I'll never have any peace till I marry the girl," he said.

CHAPTER XXIX

Joseph Chandler Brown, Ph.D., and Kyriakoula Takis were married in the chapel of the British Legation in Athens. Travelers are familiar with these chapels. The British minister himself usually sits on a raised platform at one side of the pulpit, and divides with God the adoration of the congregation. Frequently the American minister occupies a pew in a similar situation on the other side of the pulpit, and for the payment of so much per annum enjoys a reflected glory. The services consist mostly of long prayers for a list of persons of more or less importance found in the *Almanach de Gotha*. The congregation is made up of "all sorts and conditions of men," and is flung at the throne of grace in a lump so labeled.

The presence of the two excellencies fills these chapels with an atmosphere of extreme aristocracy, and renders them very popular for the performance of the marriage ceremony.

"Where are the wreaths and sweetmeats?" demanded Melpo, as the dressmaker's girl brought in a box containing Kyriakoula's bridal gown. "Here's a long white veil. Very well. Here's a beautiful silk dress with a long tail. Very well. Here are orange flowers and gloves like stockings. Very well. But where are the two wreaths tied together with a ribbon, one for you and one for your husband, to be blessed by the priest and to bind you together forever?"

"There will be no wreaths," answered Kyriakoula, a little sadly.

"No wreaths!" screamed Melpo. "How can you be married without wreaths? You will be no more man and wife than you are now. It's shameful!"

"I should have liked wreaths," replied Kyriakoula, "but when a woman marries, she should go with her husband's people and do as they do. Oh! Melpo, I love him so! To-night, to-night, I shall be his wife!"

Dr. Brown's aunt signified her approval of the match in a very practical way, as she immediately settled three thousand dollars a year upon the young couple.

Had the Doctor been of a shrewd and calcu-

lating turn of mind, he might have secured a large portion of Takis's ill-gotten gains in the form of a dot.

Kyriakoula's uncle came to Mr. Burrows and introduced the subject.

"As Mr. Brown's representative," he said, "I suppose you will demand a large dowry?"

"To tell you the truth," replied the Consul, "I had not thought of the matter at all. I will mention it to my young friend, however. It is rather a delicate matter, you know, with us Americans. I don't think he will care to ask for any dowry. If the wife's father or relatives choose to give her anything, of course that will be very pleasant for Miss Kyriakoula."

"Not care to ask for a dowry!" almost shouted the uncle. "What does he get married for, then? Pardon me. I had forgotten that you foreigners had curious customs in such matters."

"Suppose then," said the Consul, "that we let the subject drop."

"But we can't, you see. Where would we come in?"

"I don't believe I understand you," replied Mr. Burrows.

The uncle looked at the Consul shrewdly. He believed that Mr. Burrows was indulging in sharp practice. It was necessary, nevertheless, to explain.

"I came to make a business proposition to you," he said. "Let us deal openly with each other. It's natural, of course, that you should ask for a large dowry. Takis wants his daughter to marry this man, and will pay all he can. Takis is very rich. Say you ask for three hundred thousand drachmas. I screw you down to two hundred and fifty thousand. Takis pays it. We turn over two hundred thousand to Mr. Brown, and we divide a clean fifty thousand drachmas between us—twenty-five thousand apiece." He was leaning eagerly forward now, looking the Consul shrewdly in the eye. His voice ran into a high sing-song, where it remained suspended at the last word.

The Consul's first impulse was to ring the bell and order Kyriakoula's uncle kicked out of the house; he was restrained from so doing by a sense of the impropriety of a quarrel during negotiations over a wedding, so he assumed a very haughty air and replied: "We will not discuss this matter further. Ameri-

cans consider such discussions as unbecoming—even disgraceful.”

“Americans are all either fools or crazy,” muttered the uncle after he left the house. “We Greeks are the only civilized people after all. I’ll tell Takis that through my efforts the dowry was waived, and lay claim to a large fee for my services.”

At Dr. Brown’s wedding the members of the different archæological institutes, the entire American colony and a few Greeks were present. Dr. Williamson was there with his wife, who, as soon as she saw how really lovely Kyriakoula looked and how tastefully she was dressed, breathed a secret sigh of relief and smiled benignly on the proceedings.

The Consul, by virtue of his office, appeared attired in frock coat and high hat, to give, as he afterward explained, “Uncle Sam’s sanction to the ceremony.” As he walked majestically up the aisle with his young French wife leaning on his arm, all agreed that not even the British minister could have added more dignity and impressiveness to the occasion. A chorus of suppressed “Ahs” greeted Kyriakoula as she appeared, escorted by her uncle, a tribute as genuine as it was involuntary.

Yet what a wizard is Love! Minnie Burrows was also arrayed in white, and poor Anderson, sitting in a dark corner of the church, kept his eyes riveted on her face. The red cheeks, paled a little by the heat, the saucy pug nose and mischievous eyes, seemed to him easily to eclipse Kyriakoula's charms. The ceremony was performed late in the afternoon, and the bridal party drove immediately afterward to the Angleterre Hotel, where a number of guests, selected by Mrs. Williamson, sat down to a dinner paid for by Dr. Brown.

"I have never seen so strikingly handsome a couple," declared Mrs. Williamson afterward to her close friend, the Countess Verzené. "You really must invite them to your cotillon, to please me. Her bridal robe fitted her as though she had worn French gowns all her life. And he is so distingué! He comes from one of our oldest New England families."

CHAPTER XXX

Dr. Williamson was in great form at the marriage feast. He proposed the health of the bride in a speech so full of feeling that it brought tears to the eyes of several of the ladies. He also went through his entire stock of comic stories in unusual form, and one or two of them reminded the Consul of jokes he had read in Puck.

On the whole, Dr. Brown could not realize that he was dining at his own table with his own wife. He was not asked to say anything, and indeed, during the entire evening, whenever it was necessary for him to move, Mrs. Williamson pushed him skilfully where he ought to go.

During dinner he kept wondering whether Bayley, who sat opposite him, had really sent his book to press, as some one had said in the morning, and if so, whether he had given sufficient credit to Argive influences. Once, during a slight lull in the conversation, he had

leaned forward with the question on his lips, but something made him hesitate, and just as he got his courage screwed up to the pitch, the Director announced that he was reminded of a funny scene he had once witnessed at a negro baptism, whereupon Mrs. Williamson cried, "Oh, Canute, don't tell that!" and everybody else chorused, "Tell it, Professor! Tell it!"

Anderson, from his superior knowledge of Greek, had been seated next to Kyriakoula, with the whispered injunction that he must talk to her. The result was that he passed a most miserable evening. A German student with a "Von" before his name took Minnie out, and the two seemed absorbed in each other. Anderson wondered what she could see in a man with a thick neck and an embroidered shirt-front, and mentally decided that all Germans were pigs. These reflections gave him a certain amount of satisfaction, but if he attempted to pursue them he felt that Mrs. Williamson's magnetic glance was fixed upon him, and whenever he looked up, she slightly but imperiously drooped her left eyelid in the direction of Kyriakoula. Then Anderson would give a sudden start, whirl his

face, which finally became as red as his hair, toward Kyriakoula, and ask her how she liked the climate of Athens. At such times he felt that Minnie was watching him and misinterpreting his interest in the bride.

"This at least," he resolved, "I shall explain after dinner!"

But when he made the attempt, Minnie froze him with "I beg your pardon, Mr. Anderson!" and he left early in the evening.

As the evening progressed Kyriakoula grew paler and her eyes larger.

Several other guests came in after dinner, among them Mr. Croucher, correspondent for the London Graphic, a man whose ability to absorb information was little less than miraculous when coupled with the fact that he was deaf as a post.

"Do you know Mr. Creamer?" the Consul shouted in his ear. "American colleague of yours." And he proceeded, with his nose inserted in the nook formed by Mr. Croucher's ear and right hand, to rehearse the high priest's marvelous balloon experience.

"Did you see Mr. Lovell?" asked Mr. Croucher, after he had quite comprehended

the story; "Winchester Lovell, Mr. Creamer's great American rival?"

"No; he did not call and pay his respects to the representative of his country."

"No; he rushed back to Rome by the first boat. He had great respect for Mr. Creamer." Mr. Croucher talked so low that he was surrounded by a circle of listeners, all bending forward to hear. "He said: 'If Creamer's actually up there, it's no use for me to go. I'll hurry back to Rome and have the field alone for a while.' Lovell told me that same balloon story, to illustrate Creamer's genius. He said that Creamer set fire to the balloon and pounded himself black and blue with a club. Professor Calvi, the Italian, is now living as Prince Calvi in Naples. He has forty dollars a month settled on him for life by the newspaper. Lovell says that he has frequently seen him."

"I'll never believe it!" cried Mr. Burrows, indignantly. "Why doesn't Mr. Lovell expose him?"

"It would only advertise a rival sheet. Besides, I suppose Lovell is sorry he didn't think of so clever a scheme himself."

At this moment Mr. Creamer appeared in

the doorway in the full splendor of evening dress. His handsome face was flushed with excitement and pleasure. His blue eyes beamed benignly over the assemblage, and the two little curls that fell upon his forehead at either side of the part in his hair flauntingly proclaimed the full triumph of youth and vigor. So much wisdom and benignity crowning so young a brow made him seem indeed a modern Hermes.

As Mr. Burrows gazed upon that beaming countenance, the frown which his own had worn dispersed like a cloud before the sun.

"Calumnies," he muttered, "jealous calumnies."

Mr. Creamer advanced into the room, followed by a servant bearing a box that was evidently heavy.

"Put it here," he commanded, pointing to a round table standing in the middle of the floor. The flunky obeyed, and departed. Every eye was now fastened upon Mr. Creamer; the entire company had gathered about him. Taking from his pocket a tiny key, he unlocked the box. It contained a handsome silver set, in four heavy pieces.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "the

Daily Daily, the greatest newspaper on the face of the civilized globe, presents this silver set to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Chandler Brown, and wishes them length of life and happiness of days!" Pushing through to the young couple, he seized the right hand of Brown and the left hand of Kyriakoula.

"God bless you, my children!" he said, with genuine emotion in his voice. "Creamer blesses you on behalf of the Daily Daily."

No expense had been spared in purchasing the silver set, nor in the elaborate engraving which had been done upon it. Mr. Burrows, adjusting his spectacles, lifted one of the heavy pieces and read aloud: "Presented by John Creamer, Commissioner of the Daily Daily, sworn circulation 750,000, to Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Chandler Brown."

"John Creamer," "Daily Daily" and "750,000," were in letters an inch high. It was for the remainder of the inscription that Mr. Burrows needed his spectacles.

Gallantly handing the key to Kyriakoula, Mr. Creamer crossed the room to shake hands with his deaf colleague Croucher, and was soon giving the Consul a graphic account of his last incursion into Turkey.

"Ever see a massacre?" he inquired. "No? Magnificent sight—that is, of course, from a newspaper standpoint. I was standing in the window of my hotel, looking out on as peaceful a scene as you ever saw. All at once I heard somewhere a single pistol shot. Then, in the twinkling of an eye, half the population drew crooked swords from under their loose, flowing garments and began cutting the throats of the other half. The Turks jumped about like mad. I saw one of them grab a woman by the hair and jab his knee into her back, while another cut her throat. One man yanked a baby out of the mother's arms and killed it, while another despatched the mother. Her screams ended in a liquid gurgle, like those of a drowning person just sinking into the water—"

"Horrible! horrible!" cried the Consul. "Is there no God in heaven?" His excitement was justified, for this time even the famous Commissioner found it impossible to exaggerate.

"In less time than I can take to tell it, two rows of bodies stretched before me, making a path between them. You can imagine my desire to rush forth—"

"To aid them," said the Consul, finishing the sentence.

"No! That is, what could one man have done? To get to the telegraph office, of course. But they might have killed me, too, and so the greatest opportunity of my life would have been lost. But the English consul helped me out of my quandary. He sent an escort to take me over to the consulate."

It was perhaps fortunate that Kyriakoula could not understand English. This narrative was not suitable for the ears of a half-hour's bride.

Mrs. Williamson was seated on a sofa with her arm about Kyriakoula's waist. Noticing that the girl was seized with slight spasms of trembling, she pressed her waist gently and patted her cheek in a motherly way. Kyriakoula nestled closer, smooth and warm as a young lioness, and cast a glance at her that seemed half gratitude, half despair.

"Her eyes are actually black," mentally ejaculated the Director's wife. "How curious that I told the Countess yesterday they were brown!"

"I'm beginning to receive the proofs of my book," said Bayley to Dr. Brown, as soon as

the two found themselves together. "They're sending them in very fast. I got a wad this morning that kept me busy pretty nearly the whole day."

Brown was greatly excited. "I must see your book immediately. I cannot go on with mine until I learn what importance you assign to Argive influences on Attic bronzes."

"I'll tell you plainly, Doctor, I assign none at all."

"None at all?"

"Plainly, no. I do not find among all my Acropolis bronzes a single one whose ornamentation cannot be traced either to local or to Ionic influences."

"But I cannot let such a statement go without a systematic and, if I might use the term, official rebuttal. When can I get the first copy of your book? I have always attached great importance to your studies, Mr. Bayley, and do yet; but I can convince the world—I do not despair of convincing even you—that you are now on the wrong track."

"Oh, I say! That's putting it rather strong. If I didn't know what a crank you are on Heræum bronzes, I should call your language almost unprofessional,"

"Now don't be offended, my dear Mr. Bayley. If I didn't know the importance attached in learned circles to your opinions, I should not deem it so necessary to refute them when they are misleading. If you will pardon the suggestion, your error has arisen from the fact that you have not given sufficient attention to the Argive School. Had you spent four years, as I have done, studying Heræum bronzes, you would have realized that the motifs of the Argive School have had a far-reaching influence, and can be recognized in the bronzes of many other regions. Such is the case, for instance, in the Acropolis bronzes. I have not studied those so deeply as you have done, but it is sufficient for me to cast my eye over the collection to detect the familiar ear-marks of Argive motif."

"If you wish to attack my book," interrupted Bayley, "you shall have the proofs immediately. There is a mail to London—let me see—the day after to-morrow. You shall have the proofs early in the morning. I would not impede your valuable researches for a moment. If the scientific world knew that I had kept it waiting for anything from you, I

should become the most unpopular man on earth."

Dr. Brown did not understand the irony. A Napoleonic dream had taken possession of him lately. He was already the greatest living Authority on Argive Bronzes. If health and life were spared to him, might he not after ten, perhaps twenty years, of unremitting toil, come to be known as The Authority on Antique Bronzes? Not "the greatest," simply "The," as Sappho is called "The Poetess."

"I must have these proofs of Bayley's before I put pen to paper again," he reflected. "In sustaining my own theory I'll show so great a knowledge of his specialty that I shall beat him on his own ground."

"Didn't the Turks attack the consulate?" inquired the British clergyman.

"No," replied Mr. Creamer, "they did not, although we slept with rifles beside us, momentarily expecting a siege. I did a nice piece of work right there. You can't beat John Creamer without getting up before day-break."

"Oh, tell us about it!" cried Minnie, who was an attentive, though roguishly skeptical listener.

"Signed statement from a dying Armenian! Yes, sir! I prepared a full description of the sensations connected with having one's throat cut. There was a poor fellow dying right under our window. I rushed down. Luckily his windpipe hadn't been severed, and he could whisper. I promised five thousand francs to his wife and family if he would sign. He told me their address, took my stylographic pen and wrote his name with a last supreme effort. Then, turning upon me his great, dark eyes full of gratitude, he breathed his last."

"But how did you make yourself understood?" asked Minnie, irreverently. "Do you speak Armenian?"

"I—ah—the consular interpreter—"

"Of course, of course," interrupted Mr. Burrows, glancing sternly at his daughter.

It was getting late. Mrs. Williamson had caught the Director's eye and he was standing by her side.

"It's time people were going home, Canute," she whispered. "The poor thing is getting dreadfully nervous. She ought to be left alone with her husband."

The Director approached the Doctor.

"Good night, my dear friend," he said, in a loud tone. "You must not allow your wife to sit up late nights. See that she always gets a little sleep before midnight, and those pretty roses will bloom forever. That's the way I've kept them in my girl's cheeks." And he cast a glance at Mrs. Williamson like that of a young lover.

Bayley shook hands with Kyriakoula, and moved quickly over to Dr. Brown. "Good night," he said curtly. "You shall have my proofs in the morning. I'm all through with them. I must have them by nine o'clock day after to-morrow, nine A.M."

Dr. Brown followed him into the hall. "Are you going straight home?" he asked.

"Yes. Why?"

"May I send the porter with you, and he'll come right back with them. That is, if you are going directly home?"

"But I can have them here by eight o'clock."

"I—I might be restless or something, and I might just take a glance at them."

"Oh, all right. Send him along. Good night."

The guests were going rapidly.

Mrs. Williamson hurried over to Dr. Brown. "Offer your wife your arm," she whispered, "and bring her over to the door."

They made a charming tableau. There was no doubt of Kyriakoula's affection, she leaned so proudly on her husband's arm and looked so lovingly into his face.

CHAPTER XXXI

At last they were alone.

And there they stood, arm in arm, for several minutes. Kyriakoula leaned more heavily upon her husband, and pressed his arm with her hand.

A step came down the hall. Brown raised his head and listened.

"It's the boy with the proofs," he thought, thoroughly on the alert. But no. A door was unlocked and somebody went into an adjoining room.

Kyriakoula laid her head on his shoulder, and her soft hair brushed his neck, his cheek, his ear. A mummy would have made some response, and Brown, still thinking of the proofs, mechanically put his arm about her waist. Instantly she clasped him to her bosom and kissed him on the lips.

"I loave you," she said, in English. Bending back, she looked long into his face with roguish, passionate eyes. Her breath was

sweet as an evening breeze blowing from a field of wild thyme. Suddenly she buried her head in his shoulder.

"I loave you," she repeated, laughing almost hysterically. Brown led her to a chair and seated her in it. Then he sat down in another, and asked with considerable interest, "How much English do you know?"

She sprang playfully from the chair into his lap.

"Is not one chair big enough for us now?" she asked in Greek, rubbing her warm, downy cheek against his. "Are we not now one? I loave you."

"But how much English do you know?" again asked the Doctor, awkwardly drawing up his long legs and trying to seat her comfortably on his sharp knees.

"I have commenced," she replied in Greek. "I shall soon know very much, for my teacher says that I learn fast. I wanted to know my husband's language, so I began right away. So far it is very beautiful. It is like my life, all love. It is like what the world ought to be—everybody loves in it. I love, you love, they love—no, he love, we loves, you love, they love. Is it not beautiful?"

"It is indeed. But not so beautiful as your own language. I shall wish to talk Greek always with you."

"Ah, perhaps. But you will wish me to talk with your people and friends, that they may know how clever I am, and that you may be proud of me. You will not wish me to sit like a stone always, and say nothing."

The Doctor heard another suspicious noise in the hall.

"Your studious resolves are very commendable," he said, kindly, "and do you great credit. But now you must go to bed. Dr. Williamson said if you did not go to bed early you would lose the roses in your cheeks." Kyriakoula flashed a quick glance at him and blushed furiously.

"Good night," she said, again burying her face in his shoulder.

"Good night," said the Doctor, struggling to his feet and lifting her up with him. She stood for a moment at arm's length, her hands upon his shoulders, looking solemnly into his eyes.

"I loave you," she said again.

"Sas agapó," replied the Doctor, seriously. She ran into the bedroom, laughing merrily, and shut the door softly behind her.

The Doctor sat for a long time, musing. "Bayley isn't half the man I thought he was. I shall have no difficulty in removing him from the field."

The faint creak of hinges caused him to look around. Kyriakoula had not securely latched the door, and it was moving open an inch or so. He smiled.

"How funny her English sounded!" he soliloquized. "She has an extremely pleasant voice, too. The English are never so safe in their decisions as the Germans, nor so irrefutable in their conclusions. And it is so easy to form wrong conclusions. To jump at them, as one might say. One should not express an opinion at all, especially in archæology, except after the most exhaustive and complete research—research and comparison. I shouldn't be at all surprised, after seeing Bayley's proofs, if it became necessary for me to put in three or four months in the Acropolis museum. I can tell as soon as I see his illustrations and—and examples. He may have become so biased that he has selected only specimens that seem to corroborate his own theory." The Doctor was already quite familiar with Acropolis bronzes,

and he sat for some time, his eyes half closed, while a long train of oxydized sword blades, rings, mirrors, tripods, and safety pins drifted by his mental vision.

"Ionic indeed!" he snorted, half aloud.

A splash of water, accompanied by a smothered scream mingled with laughter, came from the bedroom. Greek girls always bathe on their wedding night. Kyriakoula was experimenting with the cold water in the pitcher and the Doctor's portable bathtub.

He loosened his necktie, unbuttoned his collar, and removing his coat, hung it carefully on the back of a chair. The Doctor was as methodical as a clock. As he was unbuttoning his waistcoat, he again heard steps in the hall.

"There they are, at last!" he muttered, starting for the door. But again some one entered a neighboring room. He looked at his watch. "Twelve o'clock. I don't believe Bayley means to send me those proofs. The boy has had time to go and come twice. I can tell almost at a glance whether he has treated the subject with fairness or not. The plates, of course, will not be with the proofs, but to-morrow I can go up to the museum

and look the originals over. If I should find—”

Another little scream, this time unmistakably of pain. The Doctor stepped to the bedroom door and took the knob in his hand.

“What’s the matter, Kyriakoula?” he asked, tenderly.

“Don’t you dare to come in yet—not quite yet.”

“But what’s the matter? Why did you scream?”

“I stubbed my toe against a nasty chair. Aren’t you sorry? Poor little toe!”

The Doctor pulled off his vest and threw it into a chair.

“Poor little toe!” he echoed. There was a hard knot in his shoe-string. He did not stop to untie it, but with a determined jerk broke it in two. At that moment he again heard footsteps in the hall, at first faint, then louder and louder. There was no doubt this time. Holding in his hand the shoe which he had just wrenched from his foot, he sprang to the hall door and threw it open. There stood the boy with the proofs. The Doctor snatched them from him and spread them out upon the table. He read a page.

"Why, this is absolute rot!" he muttered. He read another page. "Insidious rot, too, because he has got a deal of information together. He is an industrious collector of facts, but he does not know what they mean."

He sank into a chair, carefully wiped his spectacles, and settled down to an exhaustive perusal of Mr. Bayley's proofs. After an hour Kyriakoula came to the door in her night-robe, her eyes suffused with tears—the sweetest, warmest ghost that ever walked.

"I loave you," she said, half sobbing.

"Sas agapó," replied the Doctor.

Dawn was peeping through the shutters ere he had finished the proofs.

CHAPTER XXXII

Thanks to Mrs. Williamson's interest in them, the young couple found themselves established in a neatly furnished house on Democritus Street, almost before they knew it. People cannot entertain in a hotel. The drawing and dining rooms were connected by means of folding doors, which, when thrown open, made a fairly spacious dancing hall. There were servants' quarters below, bed-chambers above, and on the very top floor two rooms that opened upon a terrace commanding a fine view of the Attic plain, the sea, and the distant purple hills of Ægina.

"Here shall be your study, Doctor," announced the Director's wife. "Up here, away from all feminine distractions, you can write as many dreadfully abstruse books as you wish. Nobody will disturb you. Your very existence will be forgotten. You can even have a big placard with 'Cave Canem' hung on the door if you wish."

The furniture of the Doctor's bachelor apartments was moved up there, together with an easy chair; and his study lamp, filled and trimmed, was set in the middle of his writing table. Hither he moved his reference books and others, his manuscript, files, writing materials—in short, all the appurtenances of an author and a great Authority.

When everything was in place, he looked about with a sigh of satisfaction, and muttered: "I don't believe this marriage will interfere much with my plans, after all. Perhaps it will make no difference."

Kyriakoula found herself the mistress of a pretty house, a cook, a maid, and a boy in buttons to open the door. Melpo came to live with her, and made herself quite useful as confidante and adviser.

Work on the book went on in earnest, and as the Doctor got more deeply into it, his abstraction grew. He lived in the museums and his study. He found it necessary, in order to carry out his larger plan, to perfect himself also in Acropolis bronzes. Bayley's work finally came out, and the notices were in the main favorable. Dr. Brown was disgusted with one of them, which announced that the

author had "settled for good and all some questions as to the origin of bronze decoration, and had given Ionic influences their proper recognition."

"Wait," he cried, flinging the periodical into a corner petulantly, "until I have had my say!"

This settling of the question did not cause the Doctor to despair. Every archæological question is "settled for good and all" at least half a dozen times.

Kyriakoula became meanwhile, as Mrs. Williamson had predicted, quite a social lion. She was invited everywhere, and though her husband was seldom seen with her, she appeared with the Director's family. She even established a "day," whereon she dispensed lukewarm tea and smiles to the élite of Athens, and each week surprised her American friends with her progress in English.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Kyriakoula first met Mortimer Talbot at Mrs. Williamson's dance. Mortimer was an attaché of the British legation. An attaché is a diplomat in the grub state, a sort of non-descript who has entered upon the first stage of the lifetime of waiting which is known as a career. An attaché by faithfully waiting becomes a third secretary; then by waiting again he becomes a second secretary, and so on until, if he take care of his health and is not asked to wait too long in regions familiar with Yellow Jack and cholera, there is a fair chance that he may become a full-fledged minister in the autumn of his life. That is the object in view when the grub crawls into the attaché end of the hollow log of diplomacy. He cannot distinguish himself like the young surgeon or barrister and become first in his profession next year or to-morrow. All things considered, he cannot crawl through the log much faster than the other grubs.

His best plan is to get under the log and let it be shoved slowly along over him.

But waiting is a tiresome business and a man must occupy his time somehow. Mr. Talbot did not bicycle because his legs were long and it made him look ridiculous. He had learned to ride the wheel, but he gave it up because an American girl once told him that he reminded her of a grasshopper when mounted. Nevertheless he fancied himself irresistible, and his great ambition, next to that of closing his days as a minister and a K. B., was to roll up a long list of feminine conquests. Mr. Talbot was well equipped by nature for such a secondary career. In the first place, he was a diplomat, if only in the grub state, and in the second he was a gentleman in the sense that his mother was somebody or other's widow, and that somebody else was his uncle. For these reasons alone he was considered quite an acquisition in social gatherings.

In stature he was tall—quite Dr. Brown's build, in fact, except that his legs were a trifle longer. He dressed blamelessly, and was noted for his linen. In any gathering his collars were always the highest and

shiniest, his cuffs the longest and most in evidence.

Cheeks full and florid, light hair parted in the middle, an incipient mustache, and faded blue eyes of the small, bristle-lashed kind; such was the Hon. Mortimer Talbot, in pure justice to whom it must be said that he was not entirely responsible for his ideas as to his own attractions, nor for the fact that he had devoted himself so assiduously to the business of lady-killing. According to all ordinary standards he was an ass, it is true—but not a fool. All fools are asses, but an ass is not necessarily a fool.

At Mrs. Williamson's dance Kyriakoula wore a pink robe made by the Queen's dress-maker. Her back was the talk of the evening.

"Who's that superb creature?" asked the Hon. Mortimer, of Mrs. Williamson.

"Which superb creature?"

"The one—ah—in pink. Isn't she ni-ice?"

"Her husband thinks so. That's my lion."

"Oh, how very dreadful! Will she bite?"

"You shall find out for yourself. Come, let me present you to her," and Mrs. Williamson, rising, took the Hon. Mortimer's arm.

"Does she—ah—speak any known tongue?"

"A few words of such comical English."

"Oh, that'll be ni-ice!"

All women polka, even savage girls when they dance on the beach of some Pacific isle. Kyriakoula was also learning to waltz in a private class held every Thursday evening in the library of the Archæological Institute.

Mr. Talbot was most assiduous in his attentions. He danced with Kyriakoula several times, engaged her for the cotillion, and they made frequent excursions to the refreshment room together.

"Your brigand princess has really become a lioness," observed the Countess, putting up her eye-glass.

"Hasn't she?" replied Mrs. Williamson. "It's so good of dear Mr. Talbot to show her so much attention. I wonder how she talks to him?"

"When a woman is young and pretty, she isn't obliged to talk," sighed the Countess, thinking of her own red nose and forty years.

Anderson arrived late—about ten minutes before the cotillion. He did not even go in search of the hostess, but stood in the door of the library, looking eagerly into the distant corners of the room. His red hair was some-

~~what~~ disheveled and there was something in his evident excitement a little comical. Mrs. Williamson, who was a most conscientious and impartial hostess, rushed over to him with hand extended.

"How good of you, Mr. Anderson! I was so afraid you were not coming. But why are you so late?"

"I—I was very busy. Is the Consul here?"

Mrs. Williamson laughed gaily.

"Miss Burrows is in the little room off the buffet, having a tête-à-tête with Herr von Schniff. You won't be able to secure her for the cotillion unless you spoke a week ago. Do take one of the poor little Varnely girls, that's a dear."

"Minnie," said Anderson, a moment later. She was sitting alone upon the sofa. Herr von Schniff was dancing. No answer. Anderson sat down.

"Minnie," he repeated, with a slight tone of command; she arose.

"If you are addressing me," she said, "you will please remember that my name is Miss Burrows."

But he was standing in front of her, holding a letter in his hand.

"I've just received this," he said, "half an hour ago."

She looked at it curiously, turned very red, and then attempted to snatch it.

"No you don't," said Anderson. "I have been a fool long enough and suffered too much on your account to let you intimidate me any longer. And to think that you loved me all the time and were treating me in this way! You ought to be ashamed of yourself. If you don't sit down and talk with me, I'll open this letter and read it again, right here before you."

Minnie sat down.

"That's no way to make love to a girl," she said. She was trembling now and pale.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself?" he asked, tenderly. "You have been cruel to both of us. You might have made us unhappy all our lives."

"It's you who ought to be ashamed. After I wrote to you and told you that I—I loved you, and you came back and didn't say a word about it, I thought you didn't want me after all."

"But I only just now received the letter. It came in with yesterday's mail."

"Where did it come from?"

"From Thibet. It was in this letter," producing a larger envelope from his pocket. "Creamer says he's up there trying to get a signed statement from the Grand Lama. It's awfully funny. Here, put it in your pocket and read it. He's been carrying yours around all this time."

"I only wrote it because I felt sorry for you, and thought you might get killed or something. I would have done the same for anybody else."

Minnie rose. "I must go now. My cotillion partner will be looking for me."

"Are you going to dance with that fellow Schniff?"

"No."

"I thought you wouldn't dance the cotillion with a man who has a rose vine embroidered on his shirt-front."

"An embroidered shirt-front isn't half so bad as yellow shoes with a dress coat," and with a saucy toss in the air of the tiptilted nose and a flutter of white drapery she was gone.

Anderson looked down. The yellow shoes were there, sure enough. "I'll sneak out of

this," he said to himself, "before anybody else sees me."

At the head of the hall stairs, near the entrance to the library, where the cotillion partners were already taking their places, he ran upon Minnie and her father. She gave him a shy look, full of tender significance, and so different from her usual saucy glances that it made the roots of his hair tingle. He went down the steps, blushing like a schoolboy, extremely happy.

"Isn't three o'clock rather late?" called the Consul in a loud tone. Anderson looked back. Mr. Burrows had descended a little way and was talking to Minnie at the top of the stairs.

"Late, papa, indeed no! We shall be right in the middle of the cotillion at that time. I don't possibly see how I can get away before four."

"Well, Mose will be here with the carriage exactly at three. Mind you come right away with him. Good night."

"Good night, papa."

CHAPTER XXXIV

Anderson strolled out into the night, carrying with him a vision of Minnie, dressed in white, her white arms and shoulders bare, standing at the head of a white marble staircase. He seemed to be walking on clouds, and he sang, as he strolled slowly along, two or three stanzas of a Greek love song, beginning:

"Night's first lone star, high overhead,
Steals tremuously forth."

This song was peculiarly adapted to his mood, as it was the extravagant expression of a poet who believed that the stars and moon adorned the heavens for the sole delectation of his lady-love, and that flowers bloomed, waves played on the beach, birds sang, and even the sun shone for the same object. The words didn't sound at all preposterous or extravagant to Anderson. They seemed, in fact, to have been written for his especial case. When Anderson reached the fourth stanza, he ceased singing for a moment.

"How does it go?" he mused. "It's very pretty just there. I must learn the whole thing and sing it to Minnie. She knows Greek perfectly. We'll sing Greek songs together when we're married, back in America."

The night was very still, now that he had ceased singing. He was awakened from his revery by the squeak! squeak! of somebody's shoes on the walk behind him. Looking back over his shoulder, he saw Mr. Burrows just passing under a gas lamp. The old man was slowly following him, hands behind his back, head bent down.

"The old chap looks thoughtful," muttered Anderson. "I wonder if he's got a job back in America? Probably he'll go to preaching again. It's a shame to turn him out now and make him commence all over again, at his time of life. I'll bet that's what is worrying him. He's held this job down very well, too. At any rate, he has taken it seriously and tried to earn his salary. But he's got to go. They're making another clean sweep, just as they always do."

Anderson had never felt any particular sympathy for Mr. Burrows before, but all at once a great wave of pity came over him for the

aged Consul, so soon to be shorn of his dignities and sent about his business.

"He's Minnie's father," he reflected. "I wonder if he's got anything saved up to live on?"

This latter thought brought him back again to the subject of his great happiness, and a half-formed resolution that had been fluttering before his mind took sharp and definite shape.

"He'll be glad to think that Minnie's provided for, anyway. I'll break it to him now, and ask him for her as humbly as though he were the Czar of Russia."

Turning about, he walked back a few steps and met the Consul.

"Good evening, Mr. Burrows. Walking home, too, eh? I thought it was you."

"Ah, Mr. Anderson. Yes. I'm getting along toward middle life, you see. But how does it happen that a young man like yourself could leave so early a scene of mirth and festivity?"

"Oh, I went late, and could get no partner for the cotillion. It's no fun, even for a young man, to sit around and watch others trip the light fantastic."

"You should have spoken early. What

does the proverb say: It's the early bird that catches the—ah—worm, yes, worm. Worm sounds a little peculiar in that connection, but the proverb seems to apply to cotillions."

"Why didn't you say: It's the early worm that catches the bird? We are all mere worms, you know; but it's quite appropriate to refer to a pretty girl as a bird."

Mr. Burrows laughed more heartily than such a wretched joke seemed to warrant.

"By Jove!" thought Anderson. "He doesn't seem so very sad, after all."

Several times the young man attempted to approach the subject on his mind, but did not succeed. At the very last, when the Consul had opened the iron gate leading into the small garden in front of his residence, Anderson made a great effort and blurted it out. All his volubility and ready wit deserted him in an instant, and his language sounded ridiculously stilted and awkward.

"Mr. Burrows," he said, "I have obtruded my society on you this evening because I had something of great importance which I wish to speak to you about. Something—something—"

"Is it consular business, my dear young

friend? If so, cannot we leave it till to-morrow? You will always find Uncle Sam at home from ten to twelve, and you can speak with me in my private office with the greatest—ah—privacy. Suppose we say to-morrow morning at eleven? Yes, I'll look for you at eleven. Good night."

"But, Mr. Burrows, it's not consular business. It's something that I ought to speak with you about now. It's about Minnie. I love her, and she loves me, and we want to marry each other. It all came out this evening, and I thought, as a man of honor, that I ought to tell you immediately. I'm in a position to support her in a moderate style. Wainwright & Mitchell, the New York architects, have offered me a position. They will start a branch in Philadelphia, and will put me in charge of it. Twelve hundred dollars a year, with a commission on any business that I may bring in. It ought to be worth two thousand. I don't call that bad for a young man, do you? You see, I'm only twenty-four."

Mr. Burrows assumed the judicial tone.

"I was not entirely unaware of your feelings in this matter," he said slowly; "that is,

my wife called my attention to the fact some time ago, but of late I had supposed the affair terminated. From an American standpoint, I should have no objection to you as a son-in-law. You are, I have no doubt, a very estimable young man. I may say I am sure of the fact—sober, industrious, intelligent. But, unhappily, we do not live in America. I have been called to the service of my country abroad. My daughter and my family are thrown into daily contact with the—ah—the nobility, members of the diplomatic set, etc. She would never be contented to live as a business man's wife. It is my choice and that of my wife that she should marry some one in a diplomatic career, and some one in the same social station as herself. Thanking you for the great honor which you have conferred upon us by your expressed wish to unite yourself with our family, I must again bid you good night."

Mr. Burrows, lifting his right hand from the top of his cane, where both had been resting, raised his silk hat and turned slowly to go. Anderson could hardly believe his ears.

"But if you are removed?" he called after the retreating figure. "If you are turned

out, as you are sure to be along with all the rest, would you then have any objection to me?"

However confident an American Consul may be, reference from any source as to the instability of his position is sure to interest him. Mr. Burrows turned back.

"Do not base any elusive hopes upon that idea," he replied. "I have employed my four years here in laying foundations sure enough to prevent any such danger as that. My reports are well known at the State Department. I have received numerous letters of thanks from American merchants and two from the Government itself. I know the modern Greek tongue. Do you think that Uncle Sam is going to turn me out, now that I have acquired the knowledge and experience that would make me useful to him?"

This was a favorite subject with the Consul. "What is the United States," he continued, "but a great business house? What would you think of a business man that discharged his employés as fast as they proved their faithfulness and competency, and as soon as they gained experience in the details of his business, and kept a continual round of green

hands in his employ? Such a policy would mean ruin, sir, ruin!"

"That's exactly what the United States does," replied Anderson. "Ruin or no ruin. Consuls are not appointed to serve the people or to transact business in our country. Consulships are political plunder."

"Many changes are made, I know," said the Consul, "but that is because men do not devote themselves with sufficient zeal to their duties. Most Americans do not care to live abroad over four years. I have realized what a grand, what a noble thing it is to serve one's country, and how useful a Consul can be. Besides, I have private information that my services are appreciated and that I shall not be removed. I confidently expect promotion."

"If you weren't Minnie's father," grumbled Anderson, as he walked alone toward his lodgings, "I should say you were an old idiot. Why, you'll get kicked out so suddenly it'll make your head swim; they haven't got down to you yet on the list, that's all. You and your French governess can't come and live on me and Minnie, either. I don't know but what rotation in office is a good thing, after

all. It's time you went home, at any rate. How such a jackass could be the father of such an angel is more than I can understand."

The Consul's refusal did not disturb him very much, for he was confident that Minnie, being an American girl, would marry him even if her father were made Ambassador to the Court of St. James.

CHAPTER XXXV

One day, two months after the ball at the American Institute and three after the inauguration of a new President, the door-bell of the American Consulate sounded, and a florid, clean-shaven young man, attired rather loudly and followed by a red setter dog, entered the office.

"Rev. Burrows?" he asked.

"I am the American Consul, sir," replied Mr. Burrows, a little severely.

"Just so; then you're the very man I want to see. Charge, Rollo!"

"Have you called on official business?"

"Well, rather. I'm the new Consul, and I've come to take over the office. If you'll just give me an idea of where things are and how to run them, you can knock off as soon as you wish."

"I—don't—understand you," faltered Mr. Burrows. "What do you mean?"

"I mean that the great powers at Washing-

ton have given me this job, and here I am."

"But I've tried to serve my country well—God knows I have!"

"That's not practical politics," replied the newcomer, good-naturedly. "Pardon my frankness—charge, Rollo! Country don't know anything about you, and don't care whether you serve it or not. You've had your four years on Easy Street, and if you haven't enjoyed them, you've wasted your time."

"But I have received no notification of dismissal. In fact, I have understood that my services were appreciated and that I was to be retained in office."

"You're evidently not a practical politician—Rollo! come here, you brute! What more notification do you want than this?"

Mr. Burrows' heart sank within him. He knew those three blue papers, numbered 1, 2, and 3. The first was an announcement that the President of the United States, reposing especial confidence in the ability and integrity of Mr. George Washington Squires, had appointed him Consul, etc.

The second was an oath of office, and the third was a demand upon the person now

holding the Consulate of the District of Athens to turn over the Government property and archives to the above-named George Washington Squires.

Mr. Burrows read them all through mechanically. The letters were a blur, but he knew the forms by heart and his eyes followed the lines.

"Isn't that notification enough?" asked Mr. Squires, cheerfully. "It means, 'Turn the rascals out,' 'To the victors belong the spoils!' Down, Rollo! I don't suppose there's anything to do here, eh, except drawing your salary?" he continued, glancing about the office. "I don't mind that in the least. I'd rather draw a salary than draw teeth. Charge, Rollo! Pretty good joke, eh? I'm a dentist, you see, from Canandaigua, New York. Can't keep out of the drawing business: draw teeth, draw salary—see? Ha! ha! ha!"

Mr. Burrows was thinking of his French wife and his two babies. As the stranger rattled on, one sentence kept repeating itself over and over in his mind, a cry of utter helplessness, "God help me! God help me!"

"I've got every hollow tooth in Canandaigua plugged for the present, and times are devil-

ish hard. People are actually taking amalgam filling in their incisors. So when this thing loomed up I said, 'I'll take it.' There wasn't any rush for it, you see, because there ain't many fees. How is that, by the way? 'Bout how many fees do you take in here? Amount to anything, eh?'"

Mr. Burrows gave a start. He had not noticed until this question was forced upon him that he was wringing his hands.

"Fees?" he repeated. "No. No fees. Ah—a few for the Government, only."

"For the Government, eh? Well, the 'gov' will have to whack up. There's nothing so attractive to my mind as a fee, an official fee. You just sign your name and say 'Two dollars, please.' Why, it's like finding it. Oh, I was going to tell you how I got this place. I organized the 'Young Men's Patriotic Peregrination Club.' I got three hundred in line, and each fellow carried a transparency. Down, Rollo! I tell you the mottoes were loo-loos. I wrote them all myself. I might have got a better thing than this if I'd struck for it, but I took this on account of the shooting. They say the Greek islands are just covered with partridges and quail. Do you

shoot? No? I'm President of the Canandaigua Reel and Trigger Club. Slung the boys all into line for the party, too. Down, Rollo! I'm going to have four years of solid out-door life. Get all I want of it for once. I don't suppose there's any real, absolute need of a fellow's being here any oftener than every pay day, is there? There's a chap here who can run the business, a vice-consul, or dragoman, or something, isn't there?"

"Will you excuse me for the present?" asked Mr. Burrows, "I'm not feeling well."

"Why cert. Rollo! But say, if you'll give me ten minutes of your time, to show me how to run this office you can knock off for good. I can get the hang of it all in ten minutes, can't I?"

Mr. Burrows's hand trembled so that the door-knob rattled as he held it. But a feeling of superior manliness and integrity came over him, that for a moment restored him to his accustomed dignity.

"If you can post yourself in business and consular forms in ten minutes," he replied; "if you can familiarize yourself with the trade peculiarities of this country, with special reference to the sale of American goods; if

you can learn the Greek language so as to talk with the native merchants, and ingratiate yourself into their favor; if you can learn the difference between consular and diplomatic functions, and exactly what are your duties toward American citizens and sailors; if you can acquire a fair knowledge of international law—if you can do all this in ten minutes and a thousand more things, then I am willing to help you. I have studied the duties of this office faithfully for four years, and only now begin to feel that I am capable of earning the salary given with it. Now, if you will excuse me, I will send in my daughter, who has assisted me a great deal in my work. She will show you where the Government property is and will help you to make out the inventory. Good morning, Mr.—Mr. Consul.”

Mr. Squires looked blankly for a moment at the closed door and then softly laughed. “The old chap has been taking this thing seriously,” he mused. “He evidently don’t know what a Government posish is for. Come here, Rollo!”

CHAPTER XXXVI

"Mon Dieu! What's the matter, Israeel? What you have?" asked the Consul's wife, meeting him in the hall. "You are white like one speerit. Are you seek?"

"No, Clotilde; it's—it's nothing. Nothing at all. Where's Minnie?"

At that moment his foreign wife seemed like a stranger to him.

"She just this moment come in. She is in the drawing-room."

Minnie was arranging some music at the piano. The Consul dropped into a chair at her side and groaned. The sprightly look that had grown with four years of dignity and comparative ease fell from him like a mask and left him an old man, feeble and frightened. It was Faust retransformed. Minnie gave one look, and throwing her arms about his neck, cooed like a dove. She knew what the trouble was at a glance; Anderson had told her to expect it.

"There, there, Dad," she said. "Never mind. Dear old Dad! We'll go back to America together and all be happy there. It's all for the best; you'll see that it is."

"But, Minnie, I had been foolish enough to depend on this position, and I have spent all the money as fast as it came. When I pay what I owe, we won't have money to get home on. I'm ruined, and I'm an old man."

This was serious, but women are braver than men, and Minnie did not lose heart. Besides, did she not have Mr. Anderson to advise her, and was he not the wisest, strongest and altogether most capable man in the world?

"Don't give up so, Dad, please don't. Things will come out better than you think, somehow. I am sure they will."

"But he's in there now, Minnie. In my—in his office."

"Who?"

"Why, the new Consul."

"I'll go right in. Don't you worry at all. There, there, Dad."

Minnie found Mr. Squires balancing a biscuit on the end of his dog's nose. He always carried a supply in his pocket for that pur-

pose. True to her word, she made out the inventory with the new Consul, but she spitefully refused to instruct him in the use of the forms.

When Mr. Burrows' personal belongings were finally separated from those of the Government, Mr. Squires found himself saddled with the fearful responsibility of custodian of the following articles:

One Letter Press.

One Pine Table for same—drawer missing.

One Scales for Postage—one weight missing.

Various Books, Pamphlets, etc.

Two Old Pasteboard boxes for filing Government despatches—cover of one missing.

One Cane-bottomed Office Chair—rickety.

One Bookcase—rickety. One window missing. No locks.

One Writing Desk—rickety. Locks to drawers broken. One foot gone and replaced by a brick.

One Pigeonhole of unpainted white pine.

One Round Consular mucilage pot with painted wooden cover.

Several pieces of furniture belonging to Mr. Burrows, a carpet on the floor, various skillful devices contributed by Minnie, and a few Frenchy touches by her step-mother had given the office a respectable, even neat, appear-

ance. These being swept away in an hour, it looked as bare and ugly as the ribs of a Pleiocene monster.

"There," said Minnie, dragging a bright red cover from a rough, unpainted pine table that stood in the middle of the room. "We'll give you that table. It belongs to us, in reality, but we'll leave it as a memento of the Burrows dynasty."

CHAPTER XXXVII

A half quarter's regular salary was due to Mr. Burrows, and transit salary to his place of residence.

"But I have no place of residence," he sighed. "How shall I fill in this last voucher?"

He finally decided upon New York, for the sole reason that Anderson knew of a cheap lodging-house there, where he had found a haven in dark days.

"The landlady is a perfect brick," cried Anderson, enthusiastically. "I know several fellows she's been good to, and she says she has never lost a cent by it. A man would be a terrible brute to bilk such a woman as that. When she knows you're friends of mine, she'll take you in as though you were at your own home."

Mr. Anderson had suddenly become a great man in the Burrows family.

After the more unwieldy pieces of furniture

were sold and all the debts paid up, Mr. Burrows found himself possessed of exactly thirty-seven dollars in cash, besides the transportation salary to New York. Fortunately, by this was meant his salary for thirty days, the time allowed by the Government for going from Athens to the American metropolis. He would therefore be entitled to a little money upon his arrival.

He took his family home on a current steamer, sailing from Patras, for the lump sum of twelve pounds, which Dr. Williamson very kindly loaned him. As there were no other passengers, Anderson and Minnie found unlimited opportunities to sing Greek love songs together on deck, and to repeat their vows while strolling up and down in the glorious moonlight. Their long, peaceful voyage was a dream of delight to them. They were sailing over purple seas to the land beyond the rainbow.

And the same ship was bearing back to his native land a broken-down and disappointed old man, bowed under a weight of responsibility which he felt himself unable to sustain.

But did ship ever sail for any port with a clean cargo of joy?

CHAPTER XXXVIII

Kyriakoula was praying. On a triangular shelf in one corner of her bedroom burned a tiny dip that floated on a tumbler of oil. Its soft rays flickered on the surface of a silver square hanging near, pierced with round holes, through which peeped the placid face of a Byzantine Virgin and the fat Greek head of an infant Christ.

Kyriakoula was kneeling—not because it is the custom of her people, but because the kneeling posture is the natural attitude of genuine prayer. With hands clasped she was looking up into the Virgin's painted eyes, which seemed in the dim trembling light to look pityingly down at her.

"Oh, my Virgin," she moaned, "my little Virgin! Help me! Pity me! You know the real thoughts of my heart; I cannot conceal them from you, I cannot deceive you. Help me, help me, little Virgin, help me! I have no other friend but you. Christ cannot

understand a woman's troubles, and I am afraid of God. I have no father, no mother, no husband. Please, little Virgin, help me. See! I'll put you in a beautiful gold frame and will make a pilgrimage once a year to your church at Tenos. Why did you let him come into my life and tempt me? I wanted to be a good woman, and be loved by my husband, and have children. Take this pain out of my heart, and make my husband love me. Please, dear little Virgin! Listen! I'll do all I said and more. I'll hang up a silver lamp in your church at Tenos, and I'll never let the light in front of your picture go out. Save me, holy woman, save and help me!"

When a woman begins to pray, she is lost.

CHAPTER XXXIX

Kyriakoula opened the door of her husband's sanctum and went in. Closing the door, she stood for a moment with her back against it, her hands clasped behind her, looking at him with frightened, wistful eyes. He removed his spectacles and wiped them. His eyes had that colorless expression which comes from much study, and he winked them several times, as one exercises a strained muscle.

The book was getting on. Reference volumes were piled high on either side of his chair, and a large bundle of manuscript was held down by the bulky tome recently issued by the industrious Bayley.

Kyriakoula advanced timidly, and tucked a straggling lock of her husband's glossy hair into place.

"You are studying too hard," she said. "You will kill yourself, and then what will poor little Kyriakoula do?"

Her sleeve disarranged a sheet of his manuscript, and he put out a hand to keep it in place.

"Is there anything I can do for you, my dear?" he asked.

"Yes, everything!" she cried. "You can love me. Oh, my husband, do not neglect me so! You will drive me to despair. Give me a little of the love that you lavish on these books. They are dead and have no souls. They cannot feel. Am I not more beautiful than they? They do not love you, and I want you, I want you now! now!"

In the excess of her grief and passion she threw her arms about his neck. The impetuous action overturned the tome of Mr. Bayley, and it fell from the table, carrying several other books with it. Half a dozen sheets of manuscript went sailing to the floor. The Doctor sprang up and began to collect his scattered treasures. Kyriakoula's face turned pale as ashes, except for a tiny rose of red that bloomed angrily in either cheek. She rushed from the room, slamming the door after her.

CHAPTER XL

The Hon. Mortimer Talbot was ascending the stairs to his apartment, accompanied by his bosom friend, an attaché in the Russian service. They laughed loudly as they came up, and their feet bumped noisily on the stairs, for they had sat long over the wine at lunch—a pardonable dissipation, for Mr. Talbot had been unexpectedly promoted to the rank of third secretary, and had been ordered to do his next term of waiting in St. Petersburg. He was spending his last day in Athens.

“Come in, old chappie,” he cried, throwing the door open. “Sit down; we’ll have a quiet talk.”

“Give me a cigarette,” said Count Dogkoff. “Where’s the brandy?”

Mr. Talbot brought two glasses from an upper shelf of his bookcase and a square bottle with a silver top, upon which the arms of his noble family appeared in bas-relief. Count Dogkoff, having lighted a cigarette, filled

a glass with brandy and swallowed the contents. The Count was a large, silent man, with brilliantly florid features. He wore a well-waxed mustache and a pointed beard, closely clipped on his cheeks.

"So lucky that you know Petersburg so well," said Mr. Talbot, sipping his brandy. "Nothing like pointers for a new town. I shan't be at all stupid there. Not like this beastly place. Aw, but life's a bore here! If I hadn't had a couple of charming admirers I should have expi-ired here, don't you know! I should have perished of ennui, I should really. There's where the Creator was so kind in making women, don't you know. They're such de-ear creatures! Princess or peasant, they're all the same. Flattery, my dear Ivan, flattery! What are you looking for?"

"Where did you put the brandy?"

Mr. Talbot brought out the bottle again and filled the Russian's glass, which the latter emptied at a gulp.

"My dear Ivan," continued the Englishman, "I must confess to a little duplicity, I really must. I brought you here partly to have a good-by talk and partly to ask a favor. I want to leave my two most valued posses-

sions in your care. You are my dearest friend, you know."

"Dogs or cats?" asked the Russian. "Give me a cigarette."

Mr. Talbot laughed. "A dog and a woman," he explained.

The Count filled and emptied his glass.

"Why don't you take them with you?" he asked. "Servants are more expensive in Petersburg than here. Take your old woman with you, and let her bring the dog."

"Really, my de-ear friend! you underestimate my friendship. I'm talking of a young and beautiful creature, who can't leave her husband even for me—" here he pulled his incipient mustache and looked sweetly out of his pig eyes, "and of a hairless Mexican dog. It is out of sheer love for both of them, it is really, that I ask you to look after them.

The Count filled and emptied his glass. "I thought you had two conquests," he observed, the pupils of his eyes turning black.

"So I have. I'll tell you about little Irene later. There's no difficulty about her. It's Kyriakoula who'll require a little work."

"The brigand's daughter?"

"Yes. She wants love, the deep, tragic kind—sighs and threats to commit suicide or to pine away and die, and all that sort of thing, you know. It's such fun! She'll believe you, too."

"The husband?" inquired the Count, taking another drink.

"That's the beauty of it, don't you know! He's a stick. Studies archæology or something or other. He cawn't see beyond his nose, he cawn't really. Oh, yes, and there's Irene; we mustn't forget Irene—she goes with the rooms. I give her a few drachmas now and then."

"I know that kind," observed the Count. "Give me a cigarette."

"Kyriakoula, my dear Ivan, isn't that kind. She loves desperately, jealously, dangerously. I never sa-aw such a woman. It's so ni-ice!"

"How can you leave it?" asked the Count.

"Aw, the little Baronne is in Petersburg now, and she's so ni-ice."

"Got any more brandy?" asked the Russian.

"Happy thought!" cried the Hon. Mortimer, rising and ringing an electric bell near

the door. "I'll have Irene bring Fifine and some more cognac."

"Who's Fifine?"

"My dog."

A chubby-faced Greek girl of about sixteen soon appeared. She had red lips and large dark eyes, which she kept fixed upon the floor. She cast a glance at the Count so shrewd that it photographed indelibly on her memory every detail of his appearance, yet so furtive that it escaped even the Russian's bold stare of admiration.

Talbot handed her the bottle, saying in Greek, "Bring cognac and Fifine."

She was back in a short time with a fresh supply of cognac, and one of those shivering little animals which Cortez found in Mexico.

"Why don't you kill the damn dog?" asked the Russian, as soon as Irene had taken her leave.

"Kill Fifine? Aw, really, I'm fond of her. No; that's part of the ba-argain."

"Very well," replied the Count. "I'll take the rooms, then, off your hands. You do seem to be better situated than I am."

Mr. Talbot filled both the glasses. "We'll

drink to the bargain, then," he said. "The rooms are a little expensive, you know."

"I'll make the Government pay for that," said the Russian. "By the way, going to the French minister's to-night?"

"Yes. Beastly bore, these masquerades. Always a great crush. What'll you wear?"

"I and two others are going as the three guardsmen. And you?"

"Aw, this being my last night in Greece, I shall be an Albanian brigand."

They went into the hall and clattered noisily down the stairs. A moment later a carriage rumbled away, bearing Mr. Talbot on a round of farewell calls.

Then a pair of trembling hands threw apart the heavy portières that hung in one entrance to Mr. Talbot's drawing-room, and a white face looked forth. At first glance, it strangely resembled the brigand Takis when he smiled.

Kyriakoula staggered forward, transformed into a fiend.

Irene bounded lightly up the steps and went into an adjoining room. She will never know how near death she was.

For a moment the woman revived in Kyriakoula, and a keen blade of pain sliced through

her heart. Clutching her breast with one hand, she threw out the other against the wall and kept herself from falling.

"I must go away from here," she gasped.
"Away! away!"

Like any wild animal when it is wounded, she thought of the woods and the mountains.

CHAPTER XLI

The French legation in Athens is the finest residence building in the city, for the French Government has a keen eye for its own dignity and the prestige of its foreign trade.

On the evening before Mr. Talbot's departure for Russia, it contained a rabble of kings and queens, peasants, crusaders, brigands, fairies, and demons. Every moment carriages drove up to the porte-cochère and a stream of gorgeous or grotesque apparitions poured up the wide stairway or lingered on the marble steps.

In the grand salon a great throng of maskers was gathered. Cleopatra, a silver asp clinging to her breast, was strolling with an Italian organ-grinder, and a little woman attired as Cupid was hobnobbing with a Russian nihilist of gigantic stature and extravagant whisker. In the ball-room, queens were waltzing with peasants, nuns with toreadors, Roman senators with bicycle girls.

In the center of an apartment reserved for royalty and so constructed that its doors opened upon the ball-room and upon the salon, stood a real queen, watching the scene through a lorgnette. She had a sweet, motherly face, but her majesty was that of a scion of the Russian Czars. There was an amused expression upon her face, and she was trying to identify a gigantic Ingomar, with a paper battle-ax and a boar's head helmet, as one of her own sons.

In one corner stood three sturdy figures in high, wide-legged boots, wearing long swords loosely hung from the hip, and each holding by the brim a broad felt hat, jauntily bestuck with a feather. They were the three immortal swashbucklers of Dumas.

"Petroff has been promoted," said swashbuckler No. 1.

"Where does he go?"

"Diplomatic agent to Bulgaria. Big post. Did you hear that story about his valet?"

"No."

"Villers told me. It seems the chap has been robbing Petroff right and left, and had fifteen thousand francs in the Ionian Bank.

When Villers told him of it, Petroff was delighted, and exclaimed: 'How very fortunate! I'll be able to borrow it from him.' "

"Want a snack?" asked swashbuckler No. 2. "The buffet is about to be opened."

"How do you know?"

"Madame Cadby has risen. She knows by instinct."

Sure enough, at that moment a sublime butler threw wide two folding-doors and displayed a long table laden with dainties, about which stood a dozen or more dignified waiters in immaculate evening dress.

"There are Madame Cadby and old Facopoulos at it again," observed guardsman No. 2. "If we want anything to eat, we'd better go in soon."

"No such danger here," replied No. 3. "There's an unlimited supply. If we were at De Perrier's now, I would say your advice was good."

"What will they do," asked No. 1, "if they can't clean out the buffet?"

"They'll simply stick quietly at it till about two A.M., when they'll steal off to convenient corners and fall asleep."

"Stand back," whispered a voice. "Here comes Majesty leaning on the arm of Excellency."

The Queen passed slowly by, escorted by the French minister.

"Did you hear of my amusing visit to an American man-of-war?"

"Fortunately, no," replied the suave old diplomat; "for now I hope to hear it from your Majesty's own lips."

"I had such a delightful time! Americans are so naïve, and I admire them so much. A very young, boyish officer invited me into his cabin. Fancy! He was so amusing and so innocent. He showed me the photograph of his mother—such a sweet lady—and of his fiancée, a beautiful girl. When I came away, he gave me a little Japanese fan and a half bottle of cologne. The King's version of the story is that he also gave me his toothbrush; but that's not true."

An extremely long-legged Albanian, in all the glory of voluminous fustanella, approached the three guardsmen.

"Oh, here you are!" he said. "What a bo-ore it all is, don't you know. See you later. Ta ta!"

Guardsmen No. 3 caught him by the sleeve.

"I'll give you a pointer."

"Oh, so good of you!"

"That freak over there with the sheepskin about her shoulders and a tin helmet is the fair Baronne Weiner."

"What does she think she is?"

"Who knows? She looks like a cross between Boadicea and Hercules. At any rate, I've put you on if you want to dance with her."

"Thanks awfully; I think I won't."

Talbot departed, but almost immediately another tall Albanian pushed through the throng and stopped near the three guardsmen.

"Hello!" said No. 1. "They hunt in couples. I wonder who this one is?"

Scarcely were the words out of his mouth before a woman, dressed in the holiday attire of an Albanian peasant girl, advanced to the newcomer and looked fixedly at him.

"It rains Albanians," whispered No. 1. "By Jove, she's superb!"

"She's doing the high tragedy," said No. 3. "See her bosom heave! And her eyes! I wonder they don't set her mask on fire."

"Good efening," she said.

"Good evening, Madame; but I believe you are in error," laughingly replied the tall Albanian, in perfect Greek.

The three guardsmen gave an involuntary start and shrank backward deferentially.

"It's the Prince," whispered No. 2.

The royal masquerader put his finger to his lips, laughed softly, and sought another part of the room.

Titania passed by on the arm of Harlequin.

"I'm dying for a smoke," she said.

"Let's go out on the terrace. I'll get you a wrap. We'll be quite alone there, and we can smoke and talk all we wish."

"There goes that little Bianca woman," whispered No. 3. "They say she smokes two hundred cigarettes a day—has a box at the head of her bed and wakes up every hour and lights one. They won't come down again for two hours. Floquet is just back from Paris with a new fund of off-color stories and is in great demand now."

"By Jove!" exclaimed No. 1, "the Baronne has nailed Mortimer, after all."

In fact, a woman in a sheepskin and a tin helmet was at that moment rolling around

the ball-room in the arms of a long-legged Albanian, to the tune of a Strauss waltz.

"Poor Mort!" exclaimed No. 3; "he's stopped already. Hello! There's the Albanian woman again. Bravo! a little surprise—private theatricals!"

"Bravo! bravo!" cried half a dozen voices: but nearer the Albanian woman a great tumult immediately arose, and several ladies were screaming hysterically.

A white arm had flashed for a moment over the heads of the throng, and a keen knife had descended in a curving gleam of light.

The three guardsmen pushed their way to the spot. The Hon. Mortimer Talbot lay at full length on the floor, the jeweled hilt of a Turkish knife quivering over his heart. A pool of blood was rapidly gathering about him, staining the snowy fustanellas a bright crimson. His teeth were chattering.

Kyriakoula stood over him, holding his mask in her hand, her own face bare. In her eyes gleamed all the hate of a long line of murderers, and on her lips was the wolf smile of Takis, the brigand.

CHAPTER XLII

"Argive Bronzes and the Sources of Bronze Decorative Art," with 200 plates, and Introduction by Dr. Wilhelm of Heidelberg, four volumes, by Joseph Chandler Brown, Ph. D., has just been issued from the press of Macmillan & Co., London. The London Times says that "This great work once and for all establishes the importance of the Argive School."

FINIS.

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